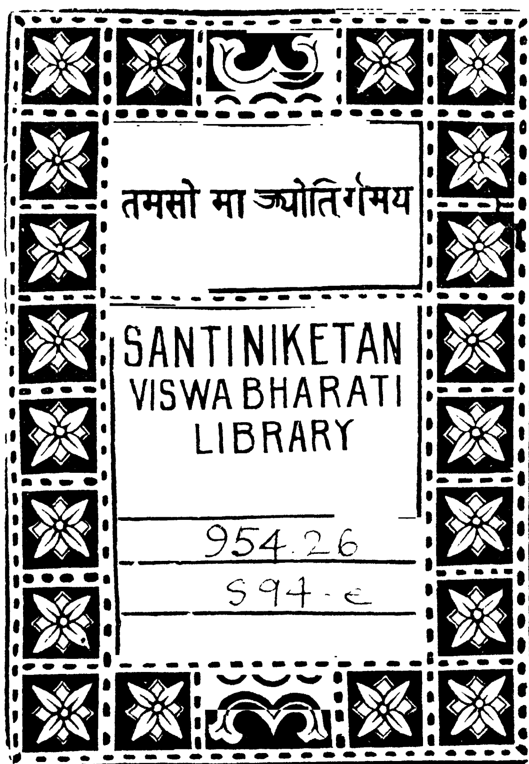


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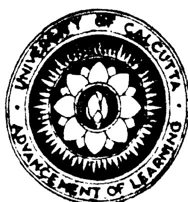
EARLY CAREER OF KANHOJI ANGRIA AND OTHER PAPERS

EARLY CAREER OF KANHOJI ANGRIA AND OTHER PAPERS

BY

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TO
MY PUPILS

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PREFACE

The papers reprinted in the present volume deal with widely diverse topics, but the majority of them can be grouped under two heads: (1) those relating to the maritime activities of the warlike people of Maharashtra and (2) those referring to the peaceful province of Bengal. The only justification for republishing stray papers written at different times during the last ten years is that they are mostly based on unpublished sources not easily accessible to the average reader. It is a matter of great satisfaction that one of the papers has fully served its purpose. After long hesitation the Government of Bengal have at last decided to provide for the preservation of the District records and transfer them to the custody of the Calcutta University.

I am greatly obliged to my friend Mr. Anil Chandra Banerjee, M.A., for the keen interest he has taken in this publication. He read the proofs, prepared the index, supplied some notes and saw the book through the press. My thanks are also due to the authorities of the Calcutta University for agreeing to publish in these days of paper scarcity a book that is not likely to prove a financial success.

IMPERIAL RECORD DEPARTMENT,
New Delhi, 3rd January, 1941.
S. N. S.

THE EARLY CAREER OF KANHOJI ANGRIA

Kanhoji Angria occupies a unique position in the history of his country. For four decades a terror to the maritime powers of the western coast, he led his sailors from victory to victory and raised the naval prestige of Maharashtra to an unprecedented height. Yet we know little or nothing about his early career. In daring and warlike qualities he attained such pre-eminence among his contemporaries that the Maratha chroniclers could not possibly ignore him; even when his descendants were called upon by the Inam Commission to furnish them with a brief account of the great admiral's maritime exploits the traditional account of his life and career had not altogether been forgotten. But every student of Maratha history knows how little has been preserved by public memory, and the official account devotes only a few sentences to the siege of Suvarnadurg which afforded the future admiral an opportunity of giving evidence of that uncommon resourcefulness, unflinching resolution and undaunted courage which earned him an everlasting renown. It is said that while leading a forlorn cause he had actually been captured by the Siddis, but prison walls were no insuperable barrier to him and before long he swam

back to the beleaguered castle to lead his comrades once again to a bold assault. It further adds that he accompanied Rajaram to Jinji and he was not appointed to the chief command of the Maratha fleet until his master's return to Maharashtra. This cannot but be a bare outline and the details are sadly wanting. It is inconceivable that while the custodian of the castle had decided on capitulation the garrison should so readily respond to the call of an inexperienced youngman who had yet to make his name and fame. It is, therefore, certain, if we accept the official account of his early career, that he must have distinguished himself in minor engagements before he could call upon the dispirited defenders of Suvarnadurg to follow his lead, and the incident took place, if this popular account is accurate, shortly before the demise of Sambhaji. But a surmise, however logical, can hardly be as satisfactory as well-authenticated facts. The English and Portuguese sources have proved more informative about the Angrias than the Marathi records, but neither the contemporary correspondence of the English Presidents, nor the official reports of the Portuguese Viceroys, nor the over credulous gossips from the far west who visited India in those days, throw any light on Kanhoji's early career. The first reference to Kanhoji Angria, hitherto traced in Portuguese papers, is about 1703. By that time he had already attained considerable fame, for in the next letter he is addressed as " Subedar da Armada do Sivaji." Mr. Sardesai is of opinion that Kanhoji became chief admiral of the Maratha fleet after the death of Sidhoji Gujar, which event took

place in 1697.[1] According to the family history the appointment took place after Rajaram's return to Maharashtra and Grant Duff opines that the prince arrived at Vishalgarh in December, 1697.[2] It is, therefore, likely that Kanhoji became Subedar of the Maratha *Armad* early in 1698, and this surmise is indirectly supported by a reference to Kanhoji in a consultation at Bombay Castle on the 6th February, 1698-99.

Here we must retrace our steps and examine the brief references to the activities of the Shivaji pirates, as the Maratha captains were called by the British merchants. Apparently Kanhoji's exploits were also included among them, for it seems that he had not yet achieved that eminence which was shortly to be his. In February, 1694-95, a letter from Surat to Bombay reported that "Ram Rajah's gallvets have been plundering at the river mouth, have taken a boat of Mocho goods, computed worth 80,000 rupees; a boat with ballast we sent to the *William and Mary* they seized, but finding nothing but stones they beat the poor Lascars and flung their sailes and rigging over board."[3] On the 16th February, 1695-96, the *Emerald* on her way from Calicut to Bombay met some "Savajee people south-ward of Danda Rajapoor."[4] If we accept the official story that Kanhoji was with Rajaram at Jinji, he could not have anything to do with the plunder of the small crafts near Surat or the cruising

1 *Marathi Riyasat*, Vol. I, p. 638.
2 Vol. I, p. 393.
3 Factory Records, Bombay, Vol. 21, p. 83.
4 F. R., Bombay, Vol. 23, p. 11, 2nd set.

of the Maratha fleet off Danda-Rajapuri. A letter from Bombay to the Company, dated the 22nd May, 1698, refers to a Maratha raid to the territories of the Raja of Karwar. " 22 Sevajees boats that came into the river, landed 300 men within half a mile of the factory, which plundered what they could finde from his subjects and offered no manner of affront to any in your Honours jurisdiction."[1] Again a letter from Bombay, dated the 10th April, 1699, urges the necessity of " small vessels for convoyes " " to encourage the trade of the island," " for the Sevajees and Singanians are now growne stronge and impudent, so that scarce any boats can pass to and from the Island without convoyes."[2] The insecurity of the Bombay vessels may safely be attributed to Kanhoji's enterprise but it is not quite certain whether he inspired or led the Karwar expedition. For, apparently Kanhoji's jurisdiction did not at this date extend to the southern squadron. From a Portuguese letter, dated the 20th April, 1702,[3] it appears that one Bhavanji Mohite commanded the Malwan fleet. It is not unlikely that he belonged to the same family as Achloji Mohite whose delinquency offered Kanhoji an opportunity of coming to the front. Two other Portuguese letters, written in 1705, go to prove that in that year a squadron of the Maratha fleet was under the command of one " Dauda Khan," who is variously styled as " Sarnobata " and " Subedar da Armada do Sivagy." From the text of one of these epistles

[1] O. C., Vol. 54, No. 6566.
[2] O. C., Vol. 55, No. 6642.
[3] Sen, *Studies in Indian History*, p. 47.

it appears that the jurisdiction of this officer extended to Ratnagiri and his men-of-war visited the port of Kanara where they had occasion to befriend the Portuguese.[1]

It will not, therefore, be unreasonable to conclude that from 1698 to 1706 Kanhoji was not the only Subedar of the Maratha fleet and his jurisdiction was in all probability confined to Kolaba and the northern regions of the Konkan. In any case he was in a position to assert his authority over the Commandant of Padmadurg.

About December, 1698, we learn from a letter from Bombay to Surat, dated the 20th January, 1698-99,[2] that " the Sevajees of Podundroog Castle neare Danda Rapore (*sic.*) seized upon two salt vesselles belonging to this Island, tooke the Banyans and others that were on board, imprisoned and most miserably beate them, saying they cared not for the English or any elce." The poor Banias were daily belaboured and a ransom of 20,000 rupees were demanded of them. Unable to bear the daily punishment, they executed an agreement to pay the ransom provided they were permitted to repair to Bombay. Six men from Padmadurg accompanied their captives to receive the promised sum, while two of the prisoners were left behind as hostages for the good faith of their friends and companions. The British authorities at Bombay promptly put the Padmadurg emissaries under arrest and demanded the release of the poor Banias. But this had little

1 Sen, *Studies in Indian History*, pp. 53-54.
2 F. R., Bombay, Vol. 16, pp. 42-43.

effect and Chimnaji Avji (Chunnagee Augee), Havaldar of Khanderi, replied that his colleague of Padmadurg " will not obey his orders." Then it was resolved " to stop all the salt boats that were bound for the Sevajee's country till we have received a full assurance from the several subedars that the like abuses should not be done to our people for the future."[1] This embargo on the salt boats had the desired effect and in the consultation at Bombay Castle, 6th February, 1698-99, " The Subedar of Conagy Angra having wrote the Deputy Governor for leave for the salt boats to come to his country, promising that he would get the 2 men that were imprisoned by Padamdrooke releast, and that for the future none of our inhabitants should be abused, we permitted the salt vessell to goe."[2] This is the first reference by name to Kanhoji, so far as I am aware, in the English records or in any other contemporary record.

The amity between Kanhoji and the English did not apparently endure long. In March, 1700-1, the Siddi laid siege to Khanderi and Kolaba, and Bombay found itself between the Devil and the deep sea. The Siddi falsely complained that Bombay supplied the " Sevajees " with ammunition " and because they does (*sic.*) not supply them the Sevajees take all vessells belonging to the island that they can master, and by a great number of their boats hovering about the island seem to threaten some mischief to it."[3] The Siddi was badly beaten

[1] F. R., Bombay, Vol. 5, pp. 3-4, 2nd set.
[2] F. R., Bombay, Vol. 5, p. 8, 2nd set.
[3] O. C., Vol. 56, Part 4, No. 7506.

and compelled to raise the siege of Kolaba and the "Sevajees" were again free to turn their attention elsewhere. Bombay had only two small Manchuas for its defence. In 1703 the "Sevajee galvetts," presumably belonging to Kanhoji's squadron, were worrying the fishermen of Worlee.[1] In the same year the Surat merchants wrote to their superiors at home, "'Tis reported that the Sevajees who are grown very insolent since the loss of your Honours small craft at Bombay have taken a Dutch ship."[2] In September of that year the English retaliated when a ghurab belonging to one of Kanhoji's men visited Bombay. In the consultation held at Bombay Castle, 13th September, 1703, we read, "Yesterday in the evening came into this harbour a grab under Sevajee colours, being come from Aden, which (on examination) proving to have no pass but to belong to a place called Girça, near Rajapore, under the Government of Conajee Angria, and the said Conajee Angria and his people having at sundry times committed many injurious and piratical actions on the inhabitants of this Island. In consideration thereof as likewise of the orders lately received from the General and Council at Surat concerning them, 'twas agreed and resolved to embargo and detain here said vessell, cargo and people til we shall receive their orders concerning them."[3] The English were to rue this action before long. In November, next year, information arrived from a coast-guard that "Conjee Angra, a

[1] F. R., Bombay, Vol. 5, p. 9, 3rd set.
[2] O. C., Vol. 63, No. 8653.
[3] F. R., Bombay, Vol. 5, pp. 11-12, 3rd set.

Savajee pirate, independant on that Raja, came into the Bay the 22nd instant with seaven galvetts and anchored with his groab at Pen Rivers mouth, six of them goeing in out of her sight, but Conjee Angra road there till yesterday morning the 23d." Reference is made to a treaty between Sir John Gayer and Kanhoji Angria by which the latter had undertaken not to molest Bombay ships. The text of this treaty has not been traced as yet but Kanhoji had apparently serious grievances. Bombay was in a sorry plight. The island ran the risk of being starved and Mr. William Reynolds was deputed to wait on Kanhoji " wherever he might be found " " acquainting said chief robber his being sent to him by the English Generall of India, civilly telling him in words neither more or less that he cant be permitted searching, molesting or seizing any boates, groabs or other vessells, from what port, harbour, place of what nation soever they may be, bringing provisions, timber or merchandize to Bombay, Mahim or other places from whence they came, without breach of that friendship the English nation has always had with Raja Savajee and all his Captains in subordination to him." Reynolds was at the same time instructed "not upon any account, by word or otherwise, to threaten or insinuate any designe of hostility against him."[1] It is difficult to understand why the English appealed to the friendship of the Raja and his authority while describing Kanhoji as a rebel and independent of " Raja Savajee." Kanhoji's reply was quite frank and

[1] Bombay Public Proceedings, Vol. 2, pp. 15, 17, 21.

unambiguous. His message ran as follows: "The Savajees had done many services for the English that never kept their word with him; they had peace with the Portugueze and every one of their portes free to them; was known they had held out warr with the Mogull forty years, lived now by their sword and would seize what boates or other vessell belonging either to the Mogulls vessells from any of his forts or Mallabarr, excepting such as had Conjee Angras passports; the English being at liberty acting as they please."[1] The Maratha admiral felt that he was the sovereign of the sea and decided to assert his authority in a manner not likely to be ignored.

The toll of English loss was quite heavy, as we learn from a letter from Surat to the Company, dated 1st March, 1706-07. "Your Honours will I presume, from Bombay have a particular account of the growth of the Sevajee Canajee Angra, there ill and near neighbour. He hath lattely taken a ship belonging to Mr. Mildmay and your Honours broker at Carwarr, a ship of Mr. Bouchers of about 200 tons, per cargo amounting to 70,000 rupees, the *Diamond* of Madras carrying 12 guns and twenty-six Europeans, her cargo worth near two lakh of rupees, one of the Islands manchuas, another ship of about two hundred tons, to whose belonging I don't yet hear, and a Dutch Hoigh man'd with about 26 Dutchmen, besides sundry other small vessels."[2]

Negotiations had indeed been opened for amicable settlement between Kanhoji and the Bombay

[1] Bombay Public Proceedings, Vol. 2, p. 30.
[2] O. C., Vol. 62, No. 8514.

authorities, on whose initiative it cannot be ascertained, but letters were exchanged, and it appears that Kanhoji denied his responsibility for some of the captures, and offered to restore a Pattan ship belonging to one Samjee Beanselos (Shamji Bhonsla) of which he had made a prize, " provided articles of friendship are agreed upon with the Rana."[1] The ' Rana ' is evidently Rani Tara Bai, the regent for the minor Maratha Raja, but nothing seems to have come out of these negotiations. In February, 1706-07, Kanhoji captured the Company's Manchua cruising off the Mahim river.[2] In 1710 he made a prize of a Dutch sloop[3] and two years later he openly attacked the Portuguese fleet convoyed by Luiz da Costa and captured the Governor of Bombay's armed yacht and the *Anne* of Karwar.

Henceforth we are on surer grounds, though there is a brief lacuna here and there, *e.g.*, in 1721. The records are copious, the facts are well known and the sequence of events clear and intelligible. We no longer grope in the dark and base our conclusions on stray information. The English and the Portuguese records corroborate each other and offer a surer guide. The foreign sources are more fruitful than the indigenous, but until recently they did not receive the attention they deserve. The Portuguese papers have not yet been thoroughly sifted and studied, the Dutch sources still remain unexplored and the French records have only been superficially

1 Bombay Public Proceedings, Vol. 2.
2 Bombay Public Proceedings, Vol. 2, pp. 115-16.
3 Sen, *Military System of the Marathas*, p. 194.

examined. When this is done we may expect a most illuminating history of the Maratha navy, and, then and then alone shall we be in a position to estimate properly Kanhoji Angria's services to his king and country.

THE KHANDERI EXPEDITION OF CHARLES BOONE

A daring sailor was Kanhoji Angria. His prowess brought him eternal fame and untold wealth. Master of the Konkan littoral, lord of the neighbouring waters, he defied the country powers and challenged the might of the merchant nations of the West. The Siddis and the Savants, his immediate neighbours, felt the weight of his arms; the English, the Dutch and the Portuguese found the Arabian Sea unsafe for their merchant-men while Kanhoji's fleet rode there. In 1713 the English concluded a treaty with the Maratha chief, and the outstanding differences were settled apparently for good and to the satisfaction of the contracting powers. But lasting peace is not possible where conflict of interests exists, and both the parties were sullenly biding their time. Hostilities were renewed when Charles Boone (1716-1720), a masterful man, took charge of the Government of Bombay. Kanhoji held that the country boats freighted by the Bombay merchants were not covered by the agreement of 1713, and formed good prizes so long as they were unprovided with his passes. Boone strongly protested, and when protests proved of no avail he decided to retaliate in kind.[1] Thus began the war which lasted till 1756

[1] For a detailed discussion see Sen, *Military System of the Marathas*, pp. 196-202. (For a realistic description of Kanhoji's exploits see Douglas, *Bombay and Western India*, P. I, pp. 113, 115-16).

without any interval, and ended with the capitulation of Gheria.

The first important episode in this stubborn contest was Charles Boone's expedition against Khanderi or Kenery, a small island which commands to a certain extent the harbour of Bombay. The island was occupied by a Maratha force in 1679 despite English opposition, and though the hastily improvised rampart of dirt and stone was fiercely bombarded by the English and their Abyssinian allies, the defenders doggedly held on. The English found their resources hopelessly inadequate for a prolonged war and the Marathas were left in possession of their much-valued prize. In 1713, Kenery was transferred to Kanhoji's care by his grateful sovereign,[1] and when war broke out Boone naturally tried to chase the enemy off his doorsteps.

The first published account of this expedition is from the pen of Clement Downing, an English sailor, who possibly took part in the assault. But accuracy was not his *forte*. Downing's memory was not as strong as he believed, and as he kept no notes, confusion of men, events and dates necessarily marred his narrative. Colonel John Biddulph consulted the contemporary records, but he did not hesitate to borrow freely from Downing's *History* whenever he found the details likely to prove interesting. A very brief outline has been given in Sir William Foster's introduction to Downing, where many of the adventurous sailor's

[1] Biddulph (*Malabar Pirates*, p. 122) is wrong in suggesting that this happened in 1710. See Sen, *Military System of the Marathas*, p. 199. Foster, *Downing's History of the Indian Wars*, p. XII.

misstatements were for the first time corrected. A detailed account of the Khanderi expedition may not therefore be absolutely without interest. Luckily a day-to-day record of the operations is still available, the authenticity of which is fairly unimpeachable. Governor Boone himself assumed the chief command of the land and marine forces employed on the expedition, and he hoisted his flag on the *Addison*, then commanded by Richard Gosfright.[1] The log of the *Addison*[2] gives a detailed account of the manoeuvring, cannonading, and assault in which the British fleet was engaged, and finally its discomfiture.

The fleet and force commanded by Boone were in number quite formidable from the Indian standard of those days. On the 1st November, 1718, the *Addison* weighed anchor at 2 in the afternoon "in company with the *Dartmouth*, Captain Carter, the *Victoria*, the *Revenge* and *Defiance* grabbs, the *Fame* gully, the *Hawke* ketch, 2 Bomb ketches and 48 gallivats." On the 3rd November, the bombardment of the island began in right earnest. The *Fame* left for Chaul with six gallivats, but the "Bomb began to play" at 3 a.m. and "continued till 8." The ghurabs fired from day-light till ten and were answered by the enemy. Angria's men could bring only 3 guns into action, and they did no execution. But it is difficult to accept Col. Biddulph's assertion that the British men-of-war

[1] Foster, *op. cit.*, p. 36, Footnote. Not Capt. Hicks who died on the 7th September, 1718.

[2] India Office No. 7034.

failed to make any impression on the garrison, because " the distance was so great that nothing was affected but waste of ammunition."[1] The log of the *Addison* positively states that the ghurabs (grabbs) *Victoria*, *Revenge* and *Defiance* " were ordered to goe within gunn shot of the S°, most part of the island and their ancher." And this they apparently did before, not after, as Col. Biddulph thinks, the cannonading commenced. The *Dartmouth* also ran close to the island, fired a broadside and some of the military officers went round with a pilot to find a suitable landing place. At two in the afternoon Kanhoji's fleet came into evidence. What their objective was it is not possible to surmise. From the beginning Boone had taken care to cut off all supply of men and munitions from the mainland and it is not unlikely that Angria's gallivats made an attempt to re-open communication with Kolaba, Kanhoji's headquarters on the opposite shores. But the *Victoria*, the *Revenge* and the *Hawke* (ketch) began a chase which had to be abandoned at 4 when fourteen of the enemy gallivats were perceived. The ketch continued to ply her shells all night and early in the morning (4th Nov.). Bombardeer Mule was accidentally hurt.

It was then decided to land two assaulting parties under cover of fire from the ghurabs. The grenadiers and the marines held themselves ready as early as 4 in the morning to land on the eastern shores of the island while a party of 558 Sepoys under the command of Captain John Miles was to

[1] *Malabar Pirates*, p. 123.

land on the opposite side. The *Fame* returned from Chaul with the attending gallivats at 2 in the afternoon and went in the evening with the *Victoria* and the *Revenge* to the eastward of the island. The *Defiance* was posted to the S.E. and the *Hawke* to the N.W. of Kenery. "The Vessells cannanaded the island very hott, lykewise the Island them, they having about 12 gunns on that side the Island," as we learn from the log of the *Addison*. The grenadiers and the marines were landed but the Sepoys could not be made to follow their example. Intimidation was tried and several of them were killed and wounded "but all to no purpose."

On the sixth[1] the *Morrice* joined the fleet and at noon three hundred grenadiers and marines made two attacks but they were beaten off "more by the force of stones hove from the rocks than fier armes." Kanhoji's men signalled this success by hoisting a red flag which appears to have been the Angrian ensign. The British ghurabs were badly battered and had to leave their previous position to attend to their leaks.

On the 7th the ghurabs opened a brisk fire at 6 in the morning which was answered by the islanders with equal vigour. A small party of marines succeeded in landing in spite of a strong

[1] Biddulph is wrong in saying that the 6th was occupied in making preparations for another attack (*Malabar Pirates*, p. 124). The log of the *Addison* mentions the above-mentioned operations. The casualties were—"killed: white 3, black 15; wounded: white 20, black 30." Also see Foster, *op. cit.*, p. XIV. Biddulph was apparently misled by C. Downing.

current. They ran directly to the gates and had almost cut them open[1] but as their efforts were not adequately supported they had to fall back, " the enemy at the same time playing very hott with putheridge (partridge) small armes and continually heaving stones." All attempt to land the Sepoys proved futile as on the 5th. The casualty was rather heavy and the ghurabs suffered grievously, " the *Revenge* having received several shott between wind and water." On the 8th a council of war was held and " agreed to goe down to Calube with the grabbs and gallivats leaving only the *Defiance* and 4 gallivats between the Island and the Main."

Thus ended an expedition designed to humble the proud Maratha sea-lord and to demonstrate the might of Britain in the eastern seas. The reason was obvious. Civilians seldom make good military leaders, and Boone was no soldier. The British force consisted mainly of raw recruits, and their morale had been badly impaired by the failure of the Karwar expedition of the previous year. As Colonel Biddulph observes, " It was the old story, repeated so often on these occasions ; a badly planned attack carried out half-heartedly by undisciplined men, under one or two resolute leaders ; as soon as the leaders were disabled, the rest retreated with more or less loss."

But contemporary feeling was not so easily appeased. The Bombay authorities sought a

[1] Downing says that John Steele, Carpenter's Mate of the *Morrice*, " had cut the Bar which went across the outer part of the Gate almost asunder."

scape-goat, and found one in Ramaji Kamathi, an opulent Brahman resident of Bombay. He was accused of carrying on a treasonable correspondence with Angria. Though there was hardly any evidence to support this charge, the unfortunate Hindu was condemned to life-long imprisonment, and his property was confiscated.

Clement Downing attributed Boone's failure to the treachery of a Portuguese renegade. According to him Manoel de Castro, a deserter from Kanhoji's service, claimed an intimate knowledge of Angria's ports and was appointed admiral of the British squadron by Governor Boone notwithstanding the protests of the officers who knew him better. This story has been accepted in toto by Colonel Biddulph, though " no trace of this appointment has been found in the Consultations."[1] Biddulph repeats Downing's story,—that, " Manoel de Castro, with his squadron of gallivats, had been ordered to lie off the mouth of the harbour and prevent reinforcements reaching Kennery. Notwithstanding he allowed five of Angria's gallivats to slip in ammunition and provisions for the besieged, of which they were believed to stand much in need."[2] No reference to this incident is made in the log of the *Addison* where we read that while the ghurabs withdrew (6th November) to attend to their damages, "Captain John Miles lay all night with 6 gallivats between Hanary and Cannary to prevent any supply coming from the Main." There was not a breath of suspicion against Miles who was employed on

[1] Foster, *op. cit.*, p. 35.
[2] *Malabar Pirates*, p. 124.

diplomatic missions to Kanhoji's headquarters on more than one occasion. Clement Downing never missed an opportunity of harping upon the prevailing ill-feeling between the Portuguese and the English in India, and the story of Manoel de Castro might have been invented to add a point to his favourite theme. It is improbable, on the face of it, that Boone should appoint a complete stranger whose antecedents were more than shady to an office of such responsibility as that of the Admiral of the Fleet when he assumed in person the chief command of the expedition on the success of which he had doubtless set his heart. Ramaji Kamathi suffered in his person and property and Manoel de Castro in his reputation because somebody in high position had committed a blunder, while Kanhoji went merrily on with his marine projects. Such, indeed, is the irony of fate!

A MAN OF MYSTERY: APAJI ANGRIA

A veritable man of mystery was Apaji, son of Kanhoji Angria, lord of Kolaba, chief admiral of the Maratha fighting fleet and "scourge of the western coast." Two of his letters addressed to Brahmendra Swami, the holy man of Dhavdashi, are still extant.[1] He was specifically mentioned by name in a letter addressed to the Peshwa early in 1748.[2] He joined the Mudagarh expedition and fought against his brother Tulaji. Yet we know next to nothing about him. The saint of Dhavdashi was not likely to take the trouble of addressing Apaji about grants of rent-free lands unless he was in a position to confirm them. He would not be recommended to the Peshwa as a fit person for His Highness's patronage had he been a mere man of straw. Apparently he played a part, however insignificant, in the complicated history of his times; but strangely enough, his name finds no place in the official account of the Angria family submitted to the land alienation commissioner,[3] and we seek in vain for any reference to Apaji in the chronicle of the Angrias (*Hakikat*), ascribed to Dabir,[4] a family servant. How can we explain this anomaly? How could a son of Kanhoji, who made a bid for power against

1 Parasnis, *Brahmendra Swami*, pp. 207-208.

2 *Selections from the Peshwa Daftar*, Vol. 24, p. 19.

3 *Kaifiyats Yadis, etc.*, pp. 1-25.

4 *Angre yanchi Hakikat* in Parasnis's *Itihas Sangraha*.

so formidable a rival as Tulaji, be entirely forgotten by the posterity?

Kanhoji was a much married man and he left a numerous progeny. Six of his sons, born in and out of wedlock, are known by name. Reference is made in Dabir's *Hakikat* to Sekhoji, Sambhaji, Manaji, Tulaji and Dhondji, while the official family history asserts that by his first wife Kanhoji had two sons, Sekhoji and Sambhaji, his second wife bore him two others, Manaji and Tulaji; Yesaji, Dhondji and others were his natural sons.[1] Was Apaji one of those others whose names were either forgotten or deemed unworthy of mention when the official history was compiled? Or should we identify Apaji with one of the six Angria brothers mentioned above? The problem has engaged the attention of Maratha historians for sometime past, but I prefer to leave it alone for the present. Suffice it to say that Rajwade tried to identify Apaji with Manaji, while Sardesai makes a tentative suggestion that Yesaji and Apaji were probably identical persons. It may be added here that according to the official history, Kanhoji's natural sons including Yesaji and Dhondji had originally been attached to Manaji at Kolaba, but Dhondji and Yesaji joined in a conspiracy against Manaji which ended in a failure. As a consequence the disloyal brothers were thrown into prison and Yesaji was deprived of his sight. Subsequently, however, the blind man succeeded in effecting his escape. He sought asylum with the Portuguese of Chaul (Revdanda) where he was

[1] *Kaifiyats Yadis*, pp. 4-5.

joined by his wife and children.[1] Yesaji's son Babu Rao, more fortunate than his father, usurped the principality of Kolaba with the support of Sindhia after the death of Manaji's son Raghuji.

Marathi chronicles, therefore, offer no clue as to Apaji's identity and throw no light on his life and exploits. Luckily he was not equally ignored by contemporary Portuguese writers, and a brief account of Apaji, published at Lisbon as early as 1750, may be reproduced here for what it is worth. The author, Jose Freire Monteroyo Mascarenhas, treated of Indian affairs in his *Epanaphora Indica*, the first part of which appeared in 1746, the second and third parts followed in 1747, the fourth saw the light next year (1748), the fifth in 1750 and the sixth part was published two years later in 1752. This interesting work might have been continued further, for Mascarenhas proposed to give an account of what happened in India during the viceroyalty of the Marquis of Castello Novo, who did not vacate office till 1750, but the subsequent parts of the *Epanaphora*, if ever published, have not been preserved.

According to Mascarenhas,[2] Kanhoji had two wives, of whom the first was Sekhoji and Sambhaji's mother, while the second bore Apaji and another son who remains nameless. According to the Hindu law Apaji should have succeeded his elder brother Sambhaji in the principalities of Kolaba and Gheria, but he was robbed of his patrimony by two bastards, Tulaji and Manaji. When Shahu concluded a

1 *Kaifiyats Yadis*, p. 7.

2 For the entire narrative see *Epanaphora Indica*, Part V, pp. 28-40.

treaty of partition with his cousin, Sambhaji of Kolhapur, the overlordship of a part of the Angrian principality was assigned to the latter. But Tulaji refused to acknowledge his rights and declined to pay him tributes. Sambhaji, unable to enforce his claims, proposed an alliance with the Portuguese Viceroy against Tulaji, but the Portuguese Government were not in a position to accept his offer at that moment. Failing to secure their co-operation, Sambhaji turned to Shahu, who advised him to make a common cause with Apaji. It was settled at the time that Sambhaji should wage war against Tulaji by land jointly with Apaji Angria and the Savant of Wari, while the Portuguese should be induced to undertake a naval expedition against Gheria. Not content with formulating this scheme, Shahu commissioned Dom Antonio José Henriques, the Portuguese agent at Satara, to proceed to Goa and persuade the Viceroy to participate in the project. But the services of the Portuguese fleet were urgently needed elsewhere as it was necessary to convoy the merchant fleet from the south and the north, and the Viceroy politely excused himself. Tulaji, however, realised the gravity of his situation and decided to remove Apaji by means fair or foul. Some of his trusty followers pretended to desert Tulaji on some suitable pretexts and were readily welcomed by Apaji. They availed themselves of the earliest opportunity of executing their fell design. The murder of Apaji naturally incensed Shahu and he incited the chief of Wari to fight Tulaji. The campaign, however, ended in Angria's favour. Shahu then summoned Tulaji to Satara. Tulaji

THE ANGRIAS AND THE DUTCH

Kanhoji Angria was not a corsair like Captain Kidd. He was the Lord High Admiral of the Maratha fighting fleet and rode the sea under his master's flag, but to most Europeans he was no better than a common pirate, who seized every ship he could, held the unfortunate sailors to ransom and made them labour hard for a scanty subsistence until they could secure their freedom either by flight or by purchase. Yet he derived his authority from the lawfully constituted government of his people, and exercised, in the name of his king, the sovereignty of the sea in a manner sanctioned by the ancient customs of the coast. In this respect his conduct did not differ in any way from that of the Portuguese, the English and the Dutch, and it is interesting to note that the trading nations from the west often brought charges of piracy against each other, but they invariably refused to allow any vessel, other than their own, to sail without their passport, unless such a right had been secured by a treaty or a convention. No self-respecting nation would quietly concede to another the right of controlling or regulating the movement of their merchant-men across the high road of the sea, and the result was constant friction. Kanhoji was resolved to defend his rights against all his neighbours jointly or severally, and at different times he fought the English, the Portuguese and the Dutch. The

struggle did not come to an end with Kanhoji's death in June, 1729, but was continued with varying success by his sons, and the Angrian fleet was a terror which the sea-farers of the eighteenth century were glad to avoid. The exploits of Kanhoji and his successors are but vaguely known, and an account of their relations with the Dutch may be of some interest to the students of Indian history.

We do not exactly know when Kanhoji was appointed to the supreme command of the Maratha fleet, but it is clear that he came to blows with the Dutch East India Company very early in his career. In the opening months of 1703 Kanhoji captured a Dutch man-of-war, as John Burniston, Deputy Governor of Bombay, informed Sir John Gayer. In a letter, dated 11th March, 1702-3, Burniston wrote: "we have a report of Cannajee Angria's trappaning a Dutch ship of 30 guns who put in near their port for wood and water, which their boats went for. The villain took his opportunity of seizing them and sending his people in galvets on board, who being haled by the ship, answered that they had provision for them, and on such a pretence surprised and mastered her."[1] How the Dutch retaliated we do not know, but we may fairly infer that peace and amity had not been established between them and Kanhoji, who again made prizes of a sloop and a galley in 1710.[2] The Dutch strongly remonstrated with him and asked him to restore the vessels with all their belongings, but Kanhoji quietly retorted that "he is

[1] Factory Records, Surat, Vol. 100.

[2] Letter from Cochin, dated 18th April, 1710—Madras Records.

not aware of any friendship existing between him and the Company, nor of any correspondence on the matter. He does not molest such merchants as make him presents as do for instance the English, Portuguese and Moors. Finally he does not hold himself responsible for the return of prizes."[1]

The Dutch Commander of Malabar corresponded with his official superiors at Batavia about some effective measures against Kanhoji's high-handedness on the high seas, but nothing came out of it. In 1710 Kanhoji was at war with the Portuguese and the Siddi. His relations with the English were also far from cordial, for he seized an English boat in 1712. In 1718, Charles Boone, Governor of Bombay, proclaimed war against Angria, and a few years later Kanhoji's territories were invaded by a joint Anglo-Portuguese force by land and sea. It is, therefore, likely that during these years of trouble and turmoil Kanhoji did not like to add to his enemies by offering any fresh offence to the Dutch, or more probably, the Dutch themselves had been more careful, and cautiously avoided the Maratha fleet.

Twenty-eight years had passed before the Angrian fleet again engaged a Dutch squadron of three ships, two of which were captured. Kanhoji was no longer in the land of the living, his eldest son Sekhoji also had passed away, and the command of the Angrian fleet was held by Sambhaji Angria Sarkhel, an intrepid sailor of uncertain temper. The official account of this battle sent home from Ceylon

[1] *Press List of Ancient Dutch Records*, pp. 7-8.

under the signature of Captain Grombrugge, Chief mate Pieter Jansz Bors and Second mate Willem Cramers of the *Noordwoolfs Bergen*, the only ship that escaped capture, has been preserved in the Public Record Office at the Hague and is well worth quoting.

" At 14 degrees of longitude (on their way to Mocha) on Sunday, the 23rd of March, 1738 in the morning at the 4th bell, we were reading a text to the crew, *viz.*, Luke 5, verse 5, when we observed North of us eight ships sailing before the wind and in our direction. After finishing our religious ceremony with prayer and song, we hailed the *Magdalena* who had been fighting with the pirates the year before and when we asked them for their opinion as to the approaching vessels, they replied " those are fishers with dry nets."

Keeping near to the yacht we gave the signal for drawing up in battle array, turning Southwest, where the sea was 13 fathom deep.

We had 4 guns, the pirates approached with 15 sails (8 goeraps, 5 large and 2 small galliots) and started firing at the 1st bell p.m.; we got a six pounder through our sternpost. Three large galliots attacked the *Zeelands Welvaren* and notwithstanding their defence, they boarded the ship; we advanced to their relief and succeeded in this purpose, but the *Magdalena* had not kept near us, as was their duty, they now came alongside the *Zeelands Welvaren*, who told them that they were free of the pirates, but that only 8 or 9 of the crew survived.

In the meantime the pirates attacked us strongly, mainly aiming at our riggings. The gunner and the paymaster of the *Zeelands Welvaren* came swimming to our board and told us that their ship was lost as the remaining part of the crew were all injured. We then tried to approach the *Magdalena* but she rapidly moved off towards the coast and soon the shallop was boarded by 2 galliots, her flag was lowered, hereafter the pirates sailed in our direction with all their might and notwithstanding our continuous firing 2 goeraps boarded the *Zeelands Welvaren* and towed the ship ashore.

We now could only save our own ship, the pirates kept firing for another 3 bells, always aiming at our riggings. We prevented them from boarding the ship and they dropped off one after another.

The whole battle had lasted 10 bells and it was now one bell before sunset, our crew were wholly exhausted, our gunnery had broken spindles and so we turned to the Southwest as soon as possible in order to pass between the isles of Maldiva and return to Cochin.

We had lost one Buginese (*sic.* Balinese) soldier and one sailor was injured.''[1]

From the letter of Laurens Kerkhoven and other prisoners, dated 19th June, 1738,[2] we learn that the battle was fought nine miles to the north of Bracelore. We find more details about the casualty and an account of Angria's land and strongholds

1 Letters from Ceylon to Holland, 1739, 3rd Vol.
2 Letters from Ceylon to Holland, 1739, 3rd Vol.

in the above-mentioned letter, as the following extract shows:

"On our side 26 were killed and many injured, both our Captains were alive with 38 European soldiers and sailors, 20 Moors and Bailnese. Of those men 2 enlisted voluntarily and 9 were forced to enter the service of the pirates. The pirates counted 200 killed and wounded men. They brought the cargo into their fortresses, sank the ships and forced us to work as slaves without drink or sufficient food.

The country is rough and unfertile, they do not sow or mow, they only go marauding. There are seven fortresses, 6 are of no account but the 7th called Boeseroebe (*sic.* Vijaydurg ?) has 50 guns. Their naval force consists of 11 large goeraps, each with 16 or 18 guns (six and nine pounders) manned with 300 men each and 29 galliots, each with 2 or 3 guns. At our arrival we found 6 Europeans in service of the pirates. *viz.*, two Englishmen, two Portuguese as gunners and two Dutchmen, one as gunner-major and secret councillor of the head of the nation."

According to Simon Siex and others, who addressed a letter to the Dutch Commander of Malabar on the 26th May, 1738, the casualty was as follows:—

Zeelands Welvaren:

28 alive
16 killed
9 forced to enlist
2 voluntarily enlisted.

Magdalena :

37 alive
12 killed
3 forced to enlist
1 voluntarily enlisted.

Sambhaji, wrongly described as king by the prisoners, demanded a ransom of 40,000 Rupees, which was later reduced to 20,000.[1] In August the so-called " King of Angria " consented to accept 15,000 Rupees for the freedom of the prisoners, who informed Van Gollenesse that they stood in fear of their life and might otherwise be forced to serve the Angria who had 9 ghurabs and 25 galliyats ready for sailing.

Van Gollenesse indeed opened negotiations with Sambhaji as soon as the report of the naval engagement reached him and requested the Maratha admiral " to send the surviving part of the crew to the residents of the Company at Barssaloor as well as the 2 shallops." The answer of Sambhaji was defiant and unambiguous, and ran as follows :—

" Writer is sending this letter with due respect and love, he has received with pleasure your letter of the 13th June, 1738, and it is true that Wihay Narana was sent with a letter, however you have answered that you would write to your authorities and await their reply before deciding about trade in our country. So we understood this matter would take a year or more and meanwhile peace was not yet made. Perhaps you know that all over the

[1] Letters from Ceylon to Holland, 1739, 3rd Vol., p. 1452.

world peace is made by contract signed by both the parties. Therefore if you intend to make peace, please send some intelligent and able men to make up the treaty and if you send ships with merchants we will live with them in perfect understanding and friendship.

As regards the shallops, if you had made peace earlier, we would never have taken these, but now we met them in times of war.

As to punishment which you purpose, you have felt our power once or twice and in future you will know it again.'"[1]

Sambhaji evidently had complete confidence in his fleet, or he would not hurl this defiance against the Dutch, for as a vassal of the Maratha King he was already engaged in a war which the Maratha state was waging against the Portuguese. The Dutch, however, could not ignore this challenge, and prepared a formidable fleet under Reinicus Siersma, who subsequently succeeded Van Gollenesse as Commander of Malabar, to avenge the insult and injury they had suffered at the hands of Angria. In 1739, the Dutch fleet, consisting of eight men-of-war, besides some light vessels, appeared near the bar of Agoada, and the Portuguese Viceroy, intent on exploiting this opportunity, proposed an alliance against the common enemy. The expedition, however, accomplished nothing and in 1743 Van Gollenesse wrote that "these pirates were growing stronger every day to the great chagrin of all European and native traders."

[1] Letters sent from Malabar to Holland, 1739, 4th Vol., p. 2225.

Sambhaji died in December, 1741. He was succeeded by Tulaji, who, according to Van Gollenesse, opened negotiations with the Dutch officers of Barcelore for peace and offered them due reparations for their loss. Apparently nothing came out of these negotiations and the Dutch Captains were instructed to do the Angrias all the damage they could. In January, 1743, Tulaji's fleet of seven ghurabs and twenty-three gallivats entered the roadstead of Calicut and "caused great damage to the English and native traders." The Dutch despatched two of their battleships, *Popkensburg* and *S. Heeren* to fight the intruders, but they disappeared before the Dutch ships appeared on the scene.

A Cochin letter of the year 1747[1] refers to fresh aggression on Tulaji's part which resulted in the loss of two Dutch ships, the *Zwijndregt* and the *Coilan*. Seven years later Angria again captured three Dutch vessels. Meanwhile rumours of a proposed alliance between Tulaji and the Ady Rajah, which were rife in 1747, caused the Dutch considerable anxiety and uneasiness. In 1754 the Dutch authorities of Batavia issued special instructions to all their vessels sailing from Surat "in order to avoid an encounter with the pirates of Cange Angria." Kanhoji had indeed passed away a quarter of a century ago but what greater compliments could his adversaries pay him than to give his name to his people?

[1] No. 437 of the Madras Records.

Unfortunately the Dutch were not the only people who wished the ruin of Angria and his fleet. The English were daily growing more powerful and the Peshwa joined them in an unholy alliance against Tulaji. Kanhoji had successfully combatted the Anglo-Portuguese alliance of 1721, but his son succumbed before the Anglo-Maratha alliance in 1756. Three Dutch letters announce the fall of Gheria and the complete destruction of that fleet which had held the merchant nations of the Malabar coast in awe for half a century. Thus ended the epic struggle between the English and the Angrias for supremacy of the sea. The Dutch archives, if properly explored, may yet throw fresh light on the history of the Maratha navy.

THE DUTCH EXPEDITION AGAINST GHERIA, 1739

On the 23rd March, 1738, Sambhaji Angria's fleet met near Barcelore a small Dutch squadron of three vessels, the *Noordwoolfs Bergen*, the *Zeelands Welvaren* and the *Magdelena*, then on its way to Mocha and boldly attacked it. After a sharp encounter that lasted for ten hours the *Zeelands Welvaren* and the *Magdelena* were forced to strike colours; the *Noordwoolfs Bergen*, badly battered, retraced her southward course to seek safety at Cochin. Her crew were totally exhausted and her artillery put out of action. The two captive ships lost nearly one-third of their crew and the survivors were carried to Sambhaji's head quarters at Gheria. The Dutch Commander of Malabar, Stein Van Gollenesse, demanded immediate restitution of the men and boats and reparation for the damage done but Sambhaji replied with characteristic irony, "If you had made peace earlier, we would never have taken these, but now we met them in time of war. As to punishment which you propose, you have felt our power once or twice and in future you will know it again." Apparently some measures stronger than verbal protests were called for. This was not the only offence that the Dutch had received from the Angria. In 1703 Sambhaji's father Kanhoji had captured a Dutch man-of-war of thirty guns and in 1710 he made prizes of a Dutch

sloop and a galley. How the Dutch retaliated we do not know, but from the concluding sentence of Sambhaji's retort, quoted above, it appears that peace had not been formally concluded between the Dutch and the Angrias, and in law as well as in fact they were at war till that Sunday morning in March, 1738, when Sambhaji's sea men encountered and worsted the Dutch men-of-war.

Exasperated beyond endurance the Dutch decided to strike at the centre of Sambhaji's power and next year a grand fleet of fifteen sails was mobilised under the command of Reinicus Siersma. The instructions issued to the Commander-in-Chief [1] briefly referred to the "piratical" misdeeds of the enemy and offered detailed information about the fighting strength of every unit under his command. They went further and specifically laid down in what order the ships were to sail. This interesting document has not been so far published and may, therefore, be quoted in full. Such were the instructions framed for the benefit of Admiral Siersma:

"The Angreans a people of pirates in the North of Malabar, latitude 16 to 19° have made themselves notorious already for a long time in these countries, by their continuous piracies on the sea, to passing ships, and since the last 10 to 20 years they have so grown in daring and strength that they have not desisted from attacking the formidable ships of European nations, and have cap-

[1] The three Dutch documents quoted in this paper are in the custody of the Madras Government. I am indebted to the Rev. Father Fruytier of Madras for the English translation.

tured several, as the English ship *Derby*,[1] they attacked the frigate *Adriana*, and the ship *Noordwoolfs Bergen* from Cochim, the yacht and the sloop *Zeelands Welvaren* and *Magdalena* all three destined for Mochia the same year. The *Adriana* alone could by heroic resistance save herself under the forts of Soendadoenga [2] belonging to Siwagie,[3] but the last three having left the harbour of Cochim together, to sail to Mochia were attacked in the neighbourhood of Goa on 23rd March, and were forced to take flight after their crew had fallen into the hands of the pirates,[4] as is described minutely in the enclosed copy of the declaration of the officer of the ship *Noordwoolfs Bergen*.[5]

"We have not failed to demand the restoration of the lost ships, and to claim a reasonable satisfaction, but these pirates have not only refused this, but answered in an insulting way.

"The Honorable Company have on this account decided by an order of 3rd August, 1738, to take such measures and actions to repress the aforesaid pirates and to secure fair satisfaction, for the offence against the Company, and to use such force as will in future make the Company's power respected. Therefore in compliance with the Honor-

[1] Captured in 1735.

[2] Obviously Sindhudurg or Malwan, then under the jurisdiction of the Raja of Kolhapur.

[3] Van Gollenesse calls Khem Savant of Wari a Siwagie, probably because technically he was a feudal noble of the Kolhapur State.

[4] As mentioned above only the *Noordwoolfs Bergen* succeeded in escaping, the other two were captured by Angria.

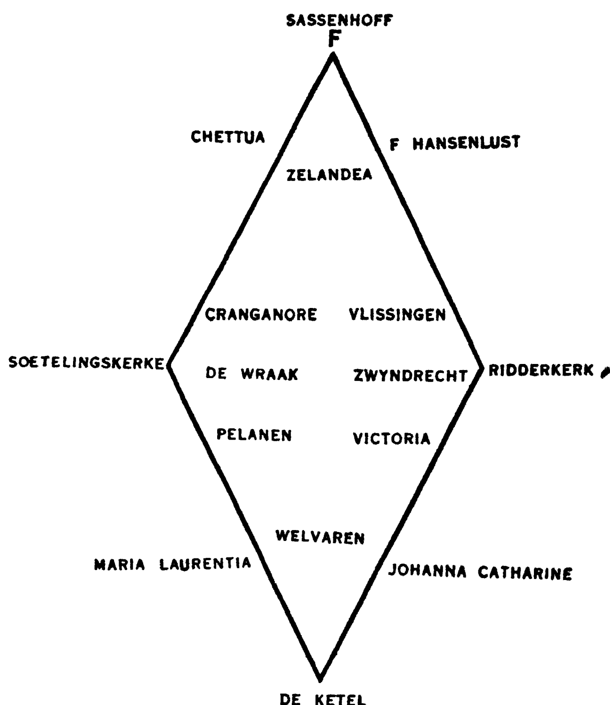
[5] See *ante*, "Angrias and the Dutch."

able Company's proposal, we have mobilised a formidable squadron composed in the following manner :—

Ships	Canon	Sailors	Military	Military Native Soldiers	Total
Sassenhoff ...	46	85	87	53	225
Soetelingskerke ...	34	100	78	85	263
De Ketel ...	44	90	54	84	228
Pelanen ...	36	69	29	44	142
Hansenlust ...	24	70	28	90	188
Ridderkerk ...	26	62	27	41	130
Johanna Catharine	18	47	...	15	62
Zelandea ...	16	29	...	15	44
Welvaren ...	22	15	...	...	15
Zwyndrecht ..	10	17	7	...	24
Vlissingen ...	8	15	7	...	22
Chettua ...	8	15	7	...	22
Cranganore ...	8	15	7	—	22
Victoria ...	4	28	1	...	28
De Wraak ...	9	24	1	...	24

" We have appointed your Honour Chief of this Expedition, because we know that in the person of your Honour, we shall find the necessary prudence and ability required for such an important expedition, and therefore we direct you at the reception of this letter to go aboard the flagship *de*

Sassenhoff and to take command of the Company's ships, and sail in the following fighting order :—



" Reaching Cannanore, you shall ask the Commander to order the sloop *Maria Laurentia* to join the squadron and bring two hundred men already recruited for the expedition.

"In Cannanore your Honour will have to change the order of your ships in such a way as to prevent the ships of the pirates, which are generally at this coast, from escaping.

"The *Soetelingskerke* a powerful ship, and the yacht *Anna Catharina* with your Honour's flag on top shall sail to Barsaloor, have the letter in duplicate to the pirates translated in the Marathi language and have the same delivered by land as soon as possible, or if this is not feasible your Honour will have it delivered in the most efficient way.

" Also it will be necessary for your Honour to gather all possible information as to where the pirates are at present in hiding, how strong they are, so that you may conduct your campaign accordingly.

" If the *Soetelingskerke* is attacked, which we certainly do not apprehend, your Honour shall send to her assistance some of the ships, of which you have a sufficient number, so that the above mentioned ship may not suffer any great loss. If for some reason or other losses are sustained, the ships shall be put ashore and handed over to the Resident Christiaan Geyselaar and Hendrick Isaacsz.

" Having carried out all these instructions as promptly as possible, your Honour shall sail directly to the capital of the Angreans, Bissente,[1] otherwise known as Gerry,[2] situated near Carepatam,[3] 16° longitude, and the squadron will anchor there with a sea-man's precaution.

" The Company's letter shall again be forwarded to the Chief of this nation in the most suitable

[1] A bad corruption of Vijaydurg. Father Fruytier informs me that the reading is somewhat doubtful.

[2] Gheria.

[3] Kharepatan.

manner asking for a written answer within twenty-four hours as to whether the Company's demands will be complied with or not.

"If they seem to be prepared to come to a reasonable agreement, then your Honour shall invite them to the flagship and begin discussions, and you shall take special care not to be misled by a people that has no honour or justice, and not to waste precious time in lengthy conferences. Your Honour will have to strictly adhere to the above mentioned demands, and may alter a few small items as specified by E. Siersma in a secret instruction under urgent necessity alone.

" If the pirates refuse to answer, then your Honour shall immediately take all steps to punish the pirates effectively, having first consulted your Council as to what in the prevailing circumstances should be done to maintain the prestige of our nation and the honour of the Honorable Company. Your Honour should decide whether the enemy is to be attacked in his chief fort Bissente and bombarded or whether a landing is to be made in some convenient place, and destroy every thing in the country with the help of some companies of Marines. Your Honour should take special care to destroy or burn all the ships of the pirates on your way out and back and in the bay, so that in future they will fear the Company and let her ships pass unmolested.

" As it is not possible to give your Honour precise instructions for all eventualities, we leave to your discretion all that your Honour may think necessary for efficiently conducting the campaign

after ascertaining the views of your Council in important matters by a majority of votes. The Council shall consist of Mr. Reinicus Siersma, Major Commander, the Captain Jan Dinke. N. Vander Beugghen and Christofell Fuitscius and Lieutenants Jan George Gomeniel and Jan Francis Lasval and the Ensigns Marcus Eicke, Joan Rijtel, August William Goris and Hendrick J. Tollenaar and the Captain of the yacht *Catharina* Steven Bade.

"Your Honour may remain there till the end of March, but if through circumstances a longer stay is needed to arrive at a final agreement, you may prolong your stay for 19 days or till the middle of April, but in that case we should like that the ship *de Ketel* be returned as her services will be required.

"The ships *Soetelingskerke* and the *Catharina* on their return journey shall call at Barsaloor and Cananoor where they will find our orders for their services, but all other ships should return direct. We hope that R. Siersma as Commander-in-Chief and the other Commanders shall execute their mission with great zeal and judgment, and that they shall bear in mind that they are fighting for the East India Company and they shall serve in such a manner that we may be able to commend them for their courage to the Honorable Company.

"Those who are found wanting in the service and may have compromised themselves through indiscipline and misconduct will have nothing but an exemplary punishment to expect so that fear may be instilled into others.

"We likewise remind you to keep an account of every thing, specially of the situations of sea ports and bays, rivers and forts, and all that may be useful if we are forced to pay another visit. Your Honour shall also keep us informed of passing events if you have an opportunity either *via* Bassaloor or Crananoor or direct.

" The papers for your Honour's guidance are the following :—

" Ordinances of the Commander Wolfsbergen, dated 25th March, 1738.

" Journal of the yacht *Adriana* on her journey to Wingirala [1] dated 1736.

" A translation of certain English letters and some charts.

" The disposition of such artillery, ammunition and other necessities which have been shipped for this expedition. Your Honour will find 20,000 pounds of gunpowder and a great quantity of necessaries which your Honour will distribute among the ships according to their need, especially gunpowder.

" Copy of a letter of the undersigned Commander to the English Commander, Mr. Stephen Laith,[2] in which the conditions are described on which the company will make peace with the Angreans. English papers delivered to the Chief of the expedition and other ordinances wherein we

[1] Vingurla.
[2] Stephen Law.

advise your Honour to keep the strictest discipline among the men and to secure this we expect the officers to set a good example. You shall take special care that religion and daily prayers are upheld and observed, so that your undertakings may receive God's blessing for the expected success which your dear friends wish you from all their heart.

(Sd.) G. W. VAN IMHOFF.
J. V. STEIN VAN GOLLENESSE."

Cochim,
8th February, 1739.

Siersma was also provided with two drafts of the conditions under which peace might be concluded with Sambhaji and the articles of treaty which he was expected to accept. The instructions left the Dutch commander little discretion about the terms to be offered to the Angria chief, but a cursory glance at the documents, quoted below, will convince the reader of their peremptory character. A man of Sambhaji's temper could hardly be expected to accept such humiliating terms unless he was reduced to the last extremities, but strong as the Dutch fleet appeared, it was hardly powerful enough to wipe out the Maratha fleet from the high seas and to reduce the rock girt naval strongholds of the Maratha Admiral that had so long defied the might of the other sea-faring people of the coast. Although the instructions quoted above mention only a fair satisfaction for the loss sustained, the drafts aim at nothing less than the reduction of the Angria chief to a state of complete vassalage.

I

" Conditions of the Treaty on which the Commander of the expedition against the people of Angrea and the chief Sambasy Angrea Sarkel may conclude peace.

1. Sambasy Angrea Sarkel shall agree by a solemn deputation to Cochim to humble himself before the Honorable Company and to beg their pardon for the audacious attacks on their Ships made by his people for several years and specially for the attack on the ship *Noordwoolfs Bergen* and the capture of the yachts *Zeelands Welvaren* and the *Magdelena* in the year 1738 and transported to Mochia.

2. The above mentioned captures must be restored and the loss sustained in the last case of Rs. 80,000 must be paid, but losses caused to several of the Company's ships on other occasions will be excused.

3. Compensation shall be given to all the men who are still detained in Sambasy Angrea's territory from the lowest to the highest without any deduction for the rations given.

All such goods shall be restored which the Commander of the fleet, or other members of the fleet can prove to have been robbed, either through an inventory or otherwise by arbitration.

4. If the above mentioned ships are still in existence Sambasy Angrea shall be bound to return them, and if they are out of repair they must be repaired so that they may be brought to Cochim. The expenses of the repairs may be deducted from

the above mentioned sum of Rs. 80,000. For other damages a sum of Rs. 10,000 must be paid provided that the equipment, cannons and ammunition as per inventory are returned as well as materials, such as sails etc., needed for navigation.

5. Sambasy Angrea shall bear the expenditure of the expedition and pay the Company Rs. 1,00,000 (one hundred thousand), or an annual contribution of Rs. 10,000 (ten thousand), which amount shall be paid yearly at Cochim before the end of April.

6. The present Chief of the Angreans and his successors to the Government of the State shall every year through a solemn deputation to Cochim, solicit the continuation of the Company's friendship and encourage the same. The Company shall show the deputation the same honours as are done to their Malabar allies.

7. All ships of Angrea shall, if they meet the Company's ships on the sea, lower their flag and strike their sails until they have made themselves known to the Company's ships, and in such a manner as will be laid down in a separate agreement.

8. The ships of the Company shall be allowed to enter the harbours, bays and rivers, belonging to Sambasy Angrea, without payment of the harbour dues or any other levy and the people of Sambasy Angrea shall be bound to supply the above mentioned ships, on payment, all their needs and whatever products they find.

9. The Company's ships in case of attack shall not only be allowed to take shelter under

Sambasy Angrea's forts but he shall be bound to protect them with his guns and to assist them with all his power without any fear of treachery as the Company never break their plighted word.

10. If per chance which the good God may avert, the Company's ships run the risk of being wrecked near Sambasy Angrea's lands then shall Sambasy Angrea and his subjects be bound to render them all help, without claiming the existing rights [1] or anything else; except a reasonable reward for those who assisted the Company's ships or saved the men or goods, to be granted at the discretion of the Commander at Cochim.

11. If the above conditions are faithfully observed, the Company will not take any further action for the loss of their ships caused by Sambasy Angrea and his people, as long as the free admission into his harbours, bays and rivers is permitted, but if it is not allowed, and if no immediate reparation is made, the treaty will be held as void, and the Company's rights will again come into force and compensation for guns, and other goods lost in former years will be again demanded. If however Sambasy Angrea observes the above conditions faithfully and desires the friendship of the Company, and wishes to continue the treaty, then it shall be in force for 15 years, and the Company

[1] According to the prevailing custom of the coast the sovereign of the territorial waters was entitled to all the ships wrecked within his jurisdiction with all their cargo. See Sen, *Military System of the Marathas*, Chapter XIII.

will see the satisfaction it gives, and also the fairness thereof.

(Given at the City of Cochim, 8th February).

(Sd.) G. W. VAN IMHOFF.
J. V. STEIN VAN GOLLENESSE."

II.

"Articles of the Treaty and agreement between the Honourable plenipotentiary of the East India Company and the accredited Ambassadors of Sambasy Angrea Sarkel, based on the several articles of the Treaty above mentioned, as to how passing ships have to make themselves known.

1. The ships of the Company shall be furnished with a special pass, which shall be completed with a seal and the signature of the Governor of Cochim with such yearly alterations to prevent imitation as the Company shall approve and consider necessary, and to which Sambasy Angrea Sarkel shall agree. A copy of this pass shall be given every year to the Ambassadors, whom Sambasy Angrea Sarkel is bound under the above article to send yearly to Cochim, and if, through unforeseen circumstances, this cannot be done, then shall the ships of the Company, sailing for Cochim in the next favourable monsoon, be given the pass of the previous year, and Sambasy Angrea shall by letter be informed of the same and whether the letter is received or not, he, well aware of the fact, that the Ambassadors have not proceeded to Cochim, and therefore, passes have not been re-

newed, shall be bound to accept the passes of the previous year as if they were renewed, and make no objection as good faith demands.

2. That, since some ships may not touch at Cochim, and may, therefore, not be furnished with passes, ships of Sambasy Angrea not excluded, the article of the general treaty as a whole, which gives the ships freedom of passage will in such cases come into force. When the Company's ships show their flag to the Angreans homage will be paid to them in the following manner.

3. As it is not safe to rely upon show of flags which can be made use of for its own profit, so that in many cases there may be uncertainty, we have found it expedient to order that the ships of Sambasy Angrea will be allowed to approach within a gunshot's distance of the bow of the Company's ships, and also to hoist the Dutch flag, as provided in the above article 7.

The Company's ship or ships having been sighted they shall be bound to turn to the wind, and put out a boat when they see that one of the Commanders is on the way, the boats on either side shall not have more than 7 or 9 oars, and no more men than is necessary for such a boat, and no weapons or anything that may cause suspicion besides a man at the rudder, and an officer to hand in the message. The above mentioned boat shall meet the Company's boat showing her pass, and the officer shall inspect the Angrean original or copy of the pass. The boats will return to their own ships, and Sambasy Angrea's ship shall leave immediately.

4. The same procedure is approved for the Company's ships which have no pass, with this difference, that such a ship must have a general sea pass, or a letter with the Company's seal, and shall have to show this to the officer of Sambasy Angrea, and every thing shall be done in the same manner as ordered for other ships so as to have a clear idea as to what part of India the ships may sail.

The ships of Sambasy Angrea wishing to hold up ships, shall arrange it as early as possible to enable the men to return to their ships before sunset, but at night it should not take place, as the rules of prudence prescribe, and all who act to the contrary shall have to take the consequences whereby the treaty with Sambasy Angrea shall be broken, unless it clearly proves to be a mistake, and immediate satisfaction is given for the damage done.

6. That this may happen less often, and that both sides may realise this better, all ships of the Company which pass by Cochim shall be given an authentic letter of instruction, and Sambasy Angrea shall be bound to do the same to all the captains of his ships, so that they may not plead ignorance thereof.

(Given in the City of Cochim, 8th February, 1739.)

(Sd.) G. W. Van Imhoff.
J. V. Stein Van Gollenesse.'

The terms were humiliating and hard and nothing but a shattering defeat would induce Sambaji to accept them. The Dutch could make common cause with other European powers in India to enforce their claims. The Angria had been at open war with the English since 1718. The Angria's fleet was also involved in the hostilities which then prevailed between the Maratha empire and the Portuguese state and the Portuguese had experienced some bad reverses in the very waters over which they had once exercised unchallenged authority. They welcomed the Dutch fleet at Agoada with open arms and suggested that all European nations should pool their resources in a joint effort against the common adversary. Why the negotiations made no progress we do not know. It was certainly not for any lack of sincerity on the part of the Portuguese. Probably the Dutch had a poor opinion of them, or perhaps the memory of the Anglo-Portuguese expedition of 1721 stood in the way of a fresh alliance with another European power. In any case the Dutch fleet sailed to the Angrian waters. The Chief Commander was authorised to land a fighting force in Angria's territories, or to bombard his strongholds or to seek the enemy on the sea. But his movements henceforth are obscure. It is clear that Siersma's grand expedition on which his official superiors had built such high hopes accomplished nothing. Obviously he had not landed his troops and it is apparent that he returned to Cochim without fighting Sambhaji's fleet. Van Gollenesse made a veiled reference to the ill success of the expedition in a

memorandum on Indian affairs prepared for the perusal of Siersma himself. "What happened between the Hon'ble Company and those pirates, how they captured the Ceylon and Cochim yachts and how their Right Worshipfuls wished to take revenge by sending a considerable squadron to that place in the year 1739 under your Worship's Command and what the result of this was need not be related here, because all this is fully known to your Worship and can be read in the records. Their Right Worshipfuls have since ordered by despatch, dated 30th October, 1739, that they must be injured in every possible way until they make honourable amends."[1] Despite the best efforts of the Dutch the Angria waxed stronger and stronger until in 1742 his Captains boldly entered the roadstead of Calicut, the southernmost point hitherto reached by them, with seven big and twenty-three small ships and inflicted immense loss on the merchant-shipping foreign and indigenous. The Dutch could do little to curb Sambhaji's power and the conquest of Gheria was left for another maritime nation of the west with whom they had once contested for the supremacy on the sea.

[1] Galletti, Burg and Groot, *The Dutch in Malabar*, p. 69.

A NOTE ON RAGHUNATHJI ANGRIA

While examining the Portuguese records at Goa in 1925, I came across three letters addressed to one Raghunathji Angria whom I could not identify at the time. In my report on the historical records at Goa I made the following observations:

"We cannot conclude this section without making a reference to another Angria who bore the same name as the Lord of Colaba. We come across three letters addressed to him in the 11th volume of the *Livros dos Reis Visinhos*. He is differently called Raghuji and Raghunathji, but he is styled as '*Cabo da Armada de Aidar Aly Can*' or Captain of Haidar Ali's fleet. It is possible that a scion of the Angria family had entered Haidar's service after the fall of Gheria. We know nothing however about Haidar Ali's Captain Raghuji. It will be somewhat rash to identify him with the Lord of Colaba. For while the one is distinctly styled as *Cabo da Armada de Aidar Aly*, the other is always mentioned as Lord of Colaba probably to distinguish him from his less exalted namesake. He might be closely related to Tulaji whose line became extinct according to the *Patre Yadi* account. It is needless to say that Haidar would gladly welcome an Angria in his country and put him in charge of his fleet as the reputation of this family of seamen as intrepid naval leaders had spread all over the Deccan."

I referred to Raghunath again on pages 230-31 of my *Military System of the Marathas,* where I wrote : " The last days of Tulaji were spent as a prisoner of the Peshwa. After his death his sons managed to reach Bombay, but all trace of them from that date is lost. The Portuguese papers mention a Raghunath Angria, who was a Captain in Hyder Ali's fleet, but there is no evidence forthcoming of his relation to Tulaji."

Recently my attention has been drawn by my friend and pupil Dr. P. C. Gupta of the Calcutta University to a letter of " Ragoonathji Angria " preserved among the Bombay records which go a long way to prove that Raghunathji Angria of the Portuguese records might after all be a son and heir of Tulaji Angria. The relevant portion of the letter runs as follows :

" ......Toolaji Angria my father was in possession of Gheria and the coast and forts in the Concon situated between that place and Bombay which is now in possession of the Mahrattas. I, who am the lineal descendant of Toolajee Angria, am now in the greatest distress. The English have always endeavoured to root out their enemies and have extended their protection to those who chose to live peaceably under their government. The Mahrattas of themselves never would have conquered and taken our forts and stronghold in the Concon, had they not been assisted by the English whose ships of war and ships came to their aid. The country was afterwards given up by the English to the Mahrattas, since which I have been wandering and in distress and have written this to intimate to

you, that it is my wish to place myself under the protection of his Brittanic Masters flag and should any difference take place between the English Company and Poona Government I will then join the former and will procure a large force to assist..."

The letter was dated 3rd August, 1800 and the identity of name and proximity of time naturally lead us to conclude that the writer was no other than our old friend Raghunath of the Portuguese records. We know that after Tulaji's death his sons managed to reach Bombay. Obviously one of them travelled south and found employment in Haidar Ali's fleet. In 1800, he addressed the letter quoted above to the Government of Bombay and tried to revive his claim to his father's fief. Although we know nothing more about him, scraps of information thus collected may throw fresh light on the later history of the house of Angria.

A NOTE ON THE ANNEXATION OF JAWLI

In 1655 Shivaji annexed Jawli. The reason was obvious. With Jawli in unfriendly hands, Shivaji could not expect to extend his territories towards the south. The annexation, however, could not be effected by peaceful persuasion. It involved the death of the ruling chief and the arrest and execution of many of his kith and kin. So far there is no difference of opinion. The main fact of conquest and annexation, apart from minor details, remains undisputed. But the methods form a subject of keen controversy. Until recently Sabhasad's story was widely accepted and there was no substantial difference between his version of the Jawli incident and that of Malhar Ramrao Chitnis. If Sabhasad is to be credited, the conquest of Jawli was facilitated and completed by a series of premeditated murders committed with Shivaji's previous approval by his trusted agents. One of them, Raghunath Ballal, proceeded to Jawli, apparently on a friendly mission, sought a private interview with the unsuspecting chief and availed himself of the earliest opportunity of stabbing him and his brother Suryaji Rao to death. Shivaji promptly appeared on the scene and captured Jawli with little difficulty as the defending forces had been completely demoralised by the unforeseen calamity. The Mores, however, soon found another champion and

rallied under the leadership of Hanumant Rao who had his head quarters at Chaturbet. Shivaji decided to remove " this thorn " and Sambhaji Kavji successfully repeated the feat of Raghunath Ballal when a third More succumbed to an assassin's dagger. Such, in short, is the story which gained currency in Maharashtra and abroad since 1694.

A different story is told by the anonymous author of a later chronicle. The late Rao Bahadur D. B. Parasnis published a brief chronicle of the Mores of Jawli in the now defunct *Itihas Sangraha*.[1] According to this chronicle, the founder of the Jawli family distinguished himself in the service of the Adilshahi ruler of Bijapur and earned the golden opinion of his master by killing a ferocious tiger single handed. His prowess was fittingly rewarded with the hereditary title of Raja and the principality of Jawli, then a wild tiger-land ordinarily shunned by peaceful people. The first Chandra Rao was succeeded by seven rulers in turn, when the main line came to an end, and the mother of the last Raja adopted a young man from a co-lateral branch of the family. It was from this prince, Krishnaji Baji, that Shivaji conquered Jawli after four months of arduous fighting. Shivaji was prepared to treat his captive with all honour and consideration, but the unfortunate man, unable to reconcile himself to his lot, opened a secret correspondence with Shivaji's enemies. The conspiracy was promptly suppressed and Krishnaji Baji was forthwith put to death.

[1] *Sphuta Lekha*, pp. 21-29.

Parasnis himself did not accept this account in toto. In *A History of the Maratha People*, a joint work of Messrs. Parasnis and Kincaid, it is admitted that Balaji More and his brother met their end at the hands of Raghunath Ballal and Sambhaji Kavji while engaged in a private interview, but it is denied that their murder was premeditated. On the other hand it is contended that Shivaji made repeated attempts to conciliate Balaji, the ruling prince of Jawli, but without any effect. When friendly negotiations failed Shivaji had no other alternative but to declare open war against the recalcitrant prince. Messrs. Kincaid and Parasnis tried to justify Shivaji's conduct, but the main story, as told by Sabhasad, remained unchallenged. It was left for the late Mr. C. V. Vaidya to call the Maratha court historian's veracity into question.

Mr. Vaidya relies mainly on the evidence of two contemporary works—*Shiva Bhārat*, a Sanskrit epic by Paramananda, a Brahman scholar of note, and the chronological notes ascribed to the Jedhes. Paramananda says that Shivaji captured the impregnable fort of Jawli after defeating Bajraj, Krishnaraj and their father Chandraraj. The Jedhe chronology refers to the reduction of Jawli after open fighting in *Paush*, 1577 (December, 1655), which was followed by the capture of Rairi four months later, when Chandra Rao More was induced to capitulate by Haibat Rao and Balaji Nayak Silimbkar. On the face of it, this evidence appears quite conclusive, but it is difficult to explain why Krishnaji Anant Sabhasad, of all persons, should go out of his way to fabricate a false story about the conquest of Jawli

and gratuitously defame Shivaji whom he apparently revered.

Krishnaji Anant was a contemporary of Shivaji, conversant with the events of his times. He occupied a position of trust and influence at the court of Jinji. He was specially commissioned by Rajaram to compile a biography of Shivaji and Krishnaji Anant completed this task in 1694, only thirty-nine years after the Jawli incident. At that date many of the junior contemporaries of Shivaji were still alive, and they would certainly not let a lie about the great king pass unchallenged. Nor was it likely that a courtier of Krishnaji Anant's position would lightly libel his master's father in a work meant for that master's eyes. The obvious conclusion is that Sabhasad's account was by no means unfounded and the contradiction of the Jedhe *Karina* and the Jedhe chronology is more apparent than real. The brief notes in the Jedhe chronology may not, after all, be irreconcilable with the more detailed account of Krishnaji Anant Sabhasad.

It is sometimes ignored that " Chandra Rao " was the hereditary title of the ruling chiefs of Jawli, not a personal name, and when one Chandra Rao died his successor automatically assumed the title. In this connection reference may be made to the term " *Chandrarājapada* " of verse 209, canto 18 of *Shiva Bhārat*. We cannot discard Sabhasad's story without establishing the identity of the Chandra Rao whom Raghunath Ballal interviewed and killed. According to the *Jawlikar More Bakhar*, the last Chandra Rao's personal name was Krishnaji Baji (while the *Mahabaleshwar Bakhar* calls him

Balaji). This was obviously an error, for the same chronicle asserts that he had been adopted by the widow of Balaji Chandra Rao, mother of Daulat Rao Chandra Rao. His name, therefore, should have been Krishnaji Balaji, and not Krishnaji Baji, supposing that the first name was correct. In all probability confusion is made here with Krishnaji Rao and Baji Rao of the *Shiva Bhārat*, sons of that Chandra Rao whom Shivaji had overthrown. In case, however, the adoption was made by Daulat Rao's wife, the second name of Krishnaji should have been Daulat Rao instead of Baji. Mr. Vaidya thinks that Krishnaji's father was installed as his guardian at Jawli, but this assumption is hardly supported by the *Shiva Bhārat*. The "janaka" (progenitor) of Krishnaji could not style himself as Chandra Rao, though according to the chronicle he was a More, unless he was the ruling Chief of Jawli. Yet the *Shiva Bhārat* definitely asserts that Shivaji overthrew or chastised Bajraj, Krishnaraj and their father Chandra Raj. Obviously, therefore, neither Krishnaji nor Baji could have been an adopted son; their father was a *ruler* of Jawli, or he would not be styled as Chandra Raj by a contemporary poet. Once this view is accepted, there hardly remains any inconsistency between Sabhasad's account and the brief notes in the Jedhe chronology. It was Krishnaji and Baji's father whom Raghunath interviewed, and his death was followed by Shivaji's conquest of Jawli. Sabhasad is silent about the sons of Chandra Rao. Apparently they fled to Rairi and the elder of the two naturally assumed the ancestral title. So when Rairi fell in *Vaishākha* of 1578, the

chief who surrendered is mentioned by his title and not by his personal name.

It may be objected that the *Shiva Bhārat*, a contemporary work, definitely asserts that Shivaji overthrew Chandra Rao in a battle. We should not forget that the *Shiva Bhārat* is a poetical work and is not free from poetical licenses. Contemporary *povadas* about the Afzal Khan incident and the reduction of Sinhgarh are not free from exaggerations and inaccuracies. Moreover, Chandra Rao and his sons are mentioned in the same verse (No. 4 of Canto 18). Obviously the poet is giving only a brief outline of the incident, and we need not be surprised if he magnifies a minor scuffle, which must have taken place in that lonely chamber where Raghunath interviewed the unfortunate chief, into a real battle. At best, Sabhasad was guilty of an omission. He certainly did not fabricate a false story to ruin the reputation of his sovereign.

Sir Jadunath Sarkar thinks that a reconstruction of Sabhasad's story is necessary. In the first edition of his *Shivaji and His Times* he mixed up the details given by different chroniclers. He is now inclined to assign to 91 *Qalmi Bakhar* a place second to Sabhasad alone in importance and reliability. This is hardly justified by a critical examination of the text. I have dealt with this question elsewhere.[1] Suffice it to say, that Sabhasad nowhere asserts that Raghunath Ballal went to the Jawli court to negotiate a matrimonial alliance. Apparently a confusion was made by Malhar Ramrao

[1] See *Shivaji Nibandhavali*, Vol. I.

Chitnis and the author of the 91 *Qalmi Bakhar*, who asserts that Shivaji sent Raghunath to solicit on his behalf the hand of Chandra Rao's daughter. According to the *Shivadigvijaya*, Raghunath proposed a marriage between Shivaji and Hanumant Rao's daughter. There is no inherent inconsistency in Sabhasad's account of the conquest of Jawli. Raghunath went on a political mission and murdered Chandra Rao and his brother Suryaji Rao. Shivaji immediately fell upon the demoralised forces and captured Jawli. But he found that Hanumant Rao could not be easily dislodged from Chaturbet and Sambhaji Kavji sought a private audience with Hanumant on the pretence of negotiating a matrimonial alliance. It is to be noted that the same trap was not laid for Chandra Rao and Hanumant Rao, and the latter might have been genuinely anxious to bring the feud to a satisfactory close, as the power of the Mores was certainly on the wane. There is no reason to reject any part of Krishnaji Sabhasad's story, for it was undoubtedly checked by well informed persons, because later chroniclers in their ignorance mixed up the order of events. Even Sir Jadunath Sarkar seems to be uncertain in his attitude, for while he definitely ascribes the murder of Hanumant Rao to Raghunath Ballal Sabnis in his revised account of the conquest of Jawli,[1] he later accepts the original story of Sabhasad and describes Sambhaji Kavji as "the murderer of Hanumant Rao More."[2] Sabhasad is not guilty of such inconsistencies and the authenticity of his story is not

[1] P. 44, 3rd Ed.
[2] P. 65.

shaken by Mr. Vaidya's criticism. Shivaji was a great man in more senses than one, and his reputation does not rest on isolated incidents. If he conquered Jawli by fraud intermixed with force, he did so in pursuance of a great ideal, the achievement of Swaraj, the foundation of Maharashtra Padshahi.

SETTLEMENT OF THE PESHWA'S TERRITORIES

The complete collapse of the Maratha military power in 1818 is easily explained. A feudal force of ill-paid, ill-equipped and badly led mercenaries yielded to superior organisation, superior science and superior leadership. It marked the triumph of progress over stagnation, of heterodoxy over orthodoxy, of growing nationalism over feudal decadence. The success of British arms caused no surprise. Conquest was easily achieved, annexation followed as a matter of course, the Peshwa went to exile, but few could foresee at the moment that the Marathas would so readily accept the new order of things. They did not lack in martial ardour and they stood to lose everything they had so long held dear. Yet the annexation of the Peshwa's territories was not followed by any serious outbreak. Here is verily a miracle that demands explanation.

The credit of this marvellous achievement must go to Mountstuart Elphinstone. The final authority of approving or disapproving a particular policy, of pursuing or avoiding a particular course of action did indeed rest with the Marquis of Hastings. But Elphinstone was the man on the spot, and enjoyed, to a remarkable degree, the confidence of the Governor-General. His knowledge of men and things in the Maratha land was both intimate and

wide and he had been closely associated with the Poona Darbar during the closing years of its chequered existence. When the brief war was speeding on to its conclusion the Governor-General wisely left to Elphinstone the supremely important and far more difficult task of consolidating the gains of war through the slower and surer process of peace. The settlement of the Peshwa's territories amply proves that his confidence was not in the least misplaced.

The main details of the settlement are quite well-known and the principle underlying them is not difficult to infer. But Elphinstone has not left us to grope in the dark and to guess his aims and objects as best as we can. In a despatch dated the 18th June, 1818,[1] he so clearly explained his scheme to the Governor-General and so lucidly argued its utility with reference to the political condition of the Maratha empire as to leave nothing in doubt or obscurity. It is a pity that, while his Report on the Peshwa's territories has been printed more than once, this unique state paper has not yet been brought to light.

Elphinstone was too keen an observer to indulge in sweeping generalisation. The keynote of his policy was forbearance and conciliation. He knew that the Maratha empire was not a harmonious whole but a loose union of heterogeneous units. Each interest had, therefore, to be separately treated with particular reference to the local condition. The Maratha soldier and the Brahman administrator

[1] Foreign Dept. Secret Cons., 26 Sept., 1818, No. 3,

had so long been accustomed to look after their own individual interests irrespective of the national welfare at large. In fact ties of nationality were yet ignored though the bonds of religion and race were frankly recognised. Elphinstone felt that if he could allay the natural apprehension of the Jahgirdars, Inamdars and petty Watandars about their own status under the new dispensation, his task of restoring peace and order in the recently reduced territories would be considerably facilitated, and for the time being at least the class that counted would not seriously challenge the new administration. He set himself to earn the confidence of the gentry who stood to lose by the Peshwa's fall and he framed his scheme of the new settlement with that object in view.

According to Elphinstone the Peshwa's territories fell into four distinct divisions: (1) the Karnatak between the Krishna and the Tungabhadra, (2) the Maratha country proper, (3) the Konkan and (4) Khandesh. At the time he wrote his despatch, the Karnatak, the Maratha country and the Konkan had been completely subjugated, but in Khandesh the Peshwa's partisans were still in arms. The Kanarese speaking people of the Karnatak had no love for their Maratha rulers and were not likely to regret a change of masters provided they were fairly and efficiently governed. The Marathas, however, could not be expected to reconcile themselves so easily to the loss of their national greatness. The peasants, who formed the bulk of the population, took little interest in politics, and would passively submit to any administra-

tion that guaranteed to them the fruits of their labour. The soldiery and the ruling classes would have to be seriously taken into account and the military forces would have to be kept on the war footing as a necessary measure of precaution.

Elphinstone then sums up his main proposals in one brief paragraph: "Next to maintaining such a force as shall prevent all thoughts of rebellion, the best means of securing the tranquillity of the conquered country is to conciliate the people; the Marathas by setting up the Rajah of Satara and by liberality to the Jageerdars: the Brahmins by keeping up their pensions and religious institutions; both castes by finding employment for the civil and military servants of the former Princes, and all by just and good Government. It is however to be remembered that even just Government will not be a blessing if at variance with the habits and character of the nation." In short, Elphinstone wanted to render the revolutionary change, which the British conquest necessarily implied, as imperceptible and as inconspicuous as he could. The fall of the Peshwa was a patent fact, but the Peshwa was only the *de facto* head of the Maratha empire, the Raja of Satara was the *de jure* sovereign. His authority, revived within a limited area, gave the Marathas some semblance of national independence. And the civil administration in the rest of the empire was to be conducted on the old lines with the maximum of efficiency and the minimum of abuse.

It was left entirely to Elphinstone's discretion whether the Raja of Satara should be assigned a small sovereignty or a suitable Jahgir, and he deli-

berately decided in favour of creating a small independent principality for the lineal descendant of Shivaji. It was not merely a concession to Maratha sentiments, but it constituted a formal guarantee to the vascilating military elements in the country that their economic interests were not to suffer and there still remained an ample sphere for their professional employment. "At the time when I had to decide," writes Elphinstone, "the Marathas showed no disposition whatever to quit the Paishwa's standard, and it appeared not improbable that the dread of the complete extinction of their national independence and still more that of the entire loss of their means of subsistence from the want of a Government likely to employ them would induce them to adhere to Bajee Row with an obstinacy that could never have been produced by affection for his person or interest in his cause." The newly constituted principality of Satara would, therefore, offer a new avenue for the ambition of the Maratha soldier and civilian. Nor was that all. If the entire country had been immediately placed under British administration the discontented elements, however insignificant, would be a cause of constant worry and anxiety to the British rulers. But if the old ruling family of Satara was restored to a fragment of its former kingdom, on the analogy of the Hindu dynasty of Mysore, people, rightly or wrongly aggrieved with the new state of things, might migrate to Satara where the indigenous system would still survive.

The revival of the Chhatrapati's sovereignty, even within a restricted sphere, was not without its

inherent risk. With the deposition of the Peshwa disappeared the last visible bond that still gave the loose feudal empire an apparent form of unity. The Chhatrapati of Satara had inherited great traditions and might serve as a symbol of the vanished glories which a later generation might aspire to revive. The Raja of Satara might still rally all the discontented elements in his race under the ochre-coloured standard of Shivaji. A far-sighted statesman, Elphinstone could not possibly overlook this latent danger. He, therefore, recommended that "the Rajah's dignity should be scrupulously preserved while his total separation from all the former dependents of his nominal state should be explicitly declared." The principality of Satara was to serve as a safety valve against Maratha discontent brewing underground without being a breeding place for future troubles. Elphinstone also suggested that "some provision may be necessary to secure the Jageerdars who are under him from being worse off than they were under the Paishwa."

He next dealt with the Jahgirdars who occupied an important place in the Maratha scheme of things. The friendly Jahgirdars were to be liberally rewarded with addition to their fiefs, and in Elphinstone's eyes neutrality, apparent or real, was as good as friendly co-operation, but unfriendly chiefs were not to be entirely deprived of their means of subsistence. Under the first category came the great Patwardhan Chiefs [1] of the southern Maratha

[1] The Patwardhan family split into many branches of which those of Sangli, Miraj, Jamkhandi, Tasgaon, Kurundwad and Gajendragad deserve mention.

country and the Desai of Kittur.[1] The attitude of the Patwardhans had at first been wavering and undecided but they ultimately took the important step of withdrawing from the Peshwa's camp. With characteristic caution they kept the route of retreat open and did not entirely burn their boats. While they opened friendly negotiations with the English they maintained an outward show of loyalty towards the Peshwa, but Elphinstone maintained that " the impression made by their conduct was nearly the same as that of an open defection," and recommended an addition of three lakhs to their Jahgir. The Desai of Kittur stood on a different footing. His ancestors were ruling princes, but the principality had been reduced by Tipu Sultan of Mysore. In 1792 it was ceded to the Marathas, and during the anarchy and chaos that followed the second Baji Rao's accession to the musnad, the Desai promptly asserted his independence. He was, however, persuaded by Sir Barry Close to come to terms with the Peshwa. When war broke out he stood aloof and " though he might have had a small party of horse with the Paishwa, he showed much more readiness to act with General Munro than with that Prince." Elphinstone, therefore, agreed with General Munro that the Desai should be formally restored to his ancient status of a tributary prince and the arrears of his rent, which the British Government, as the *de facto* and *de jure* successors of

[1] In the Sampgaon taluka of Belgaum district. In 1824 the Desai died without issue and the principality was formally annexed by the British Indian Government,

the Peshwa, might legally claim, should be totally remitted.

Far different was the case of Appa Desai of Nipani.[1] Unlike the Patwardhans he remained with the Peshwa until his defeat by Col. Adams but like them he always kept up a friendly communication with General Munro and Mountstuart Elphinstone. As a consequence he did not entirely lose his bet though he had backed the wrong horse. He was now deprived of Chikali and Manoli, and these two talukas, long coveted by the Raja of Kolhapur, went to reward his zeal and fidelity. These Jahgirdars were left in enjoyment of all their ancient rights and privileges and did not lose even the advantages derived from the laxity of the former administration. Elphinstone wrote: "These Jageerdars must by our agreement with them continue to be governed according to terms of Punderpoor which are founded on the ancient custom of the Maratta Empire. They must therefore have the entire management of their own jageers including the power of life and death, and must not be interfered with by Government unless in case of very flagrant abuse of power or long continuance of gross misgovernment. Their contingents ought only to be called out for general service, but they ought to assist in quelling any disturbance in their immediate neighbourhood. When their contingent is called out, it ought not to be strictly mustered and one fourth of the stipulated number of Horse ought to be considered sufficient;

[1] Forty miles north of Belgaum. In 1839 the principality lapsed to the British Government.

if any stricter rule is observed they will be losers by their transfer to our Government."

The lesser Jahgirdars belonged to two main classes—(1) those who held lands for the payment of troops besides rent free grants for their personal expenses and (2) those who held lands for their own support alone. Unlike the bigger fief holders, they enjoyed no independent jurisdiction, and it was obvious that they would have to live like ordinary citizens under the British Magistrates. Elphinstone pointed out that the Magistrates should, for a time at least, exercise their authority "with caution and consideration for the habits and practice of the Maratta Chiefs." Those of the lesser chiefs who did not promptly lay down their arms after Elphinstone's first proclamation would be permitted to retain their personal jahgir alone and forfeit such grants as they might enjoy on terms of military service. "It is politic and humane," Elphinstone observed, "to allow a liberal maintenance even to those who have obstinately resisted us, but it is neither required by humanity nor policy to give such persons the command of troops paid from the revenues which have fallen into our hands."

Policy demanded that the religious establishments of the old government should not be discontinued all at once. The last Peshwa used to spend nearly 15 lakhs of Rupees per year in indiscriminate charity from which Brahmans alone, irrespective of their learning and piety, profited. The *Dakshinā* gifts had a long history and were first instituted by the Dabhades of Talegaon. Elphinstone suggested that the huge amount spent in useless charity might

be conveniently reduced to a more reasonable proportion and profitably utilised in instituting two Hindu Colleges at Nasik [1] and Wai,[2] both well-known centres of Sanskrit learning, while the Raja of Satara could be expected to maintain the ordinary religious establishments of Maharashtra.

The auxiliary forces were not to be immediately disbanded; firstly because they might be required to suppress any political disturbance that might break out in the fair season, secondly, a large number of men, so long accustomed to derive their livelihood from the military profession, were not to be suddenly thrown out of employment. A necessary respite was, therefore, given them, so that they might adjust themselves to the new order of things. A fair proportion of them was expected to find employment in the newly constituted principality of Satara, while others might be recruited by the bigger Jahgirdars. Elphinstone was anxious to maintain the economic stability of the conquered country at all costs and to give as few occasions for discontent as possible.

With regard to civil administration also the same policy of caution was to be pursued and all innovations were to be avoided. "This last rule I am still anxious to enforce," he wrote, "and to endeavour to show the people that they are to expect no change but in the better administration of their

[1] 107 miles from Bombay and 5 miles from Nasik Road Station of the G. I. P. Ry., one of the most sacred places of the Hindus.

[2] 20 miles from Satara town and 15 miles from Mahabaleshwar, Wai is a well-known place of pilgrimage on the river Krishna.

former Laws." He added, "Even if they were quietly imposed, it is a question whether our regulations would be beneficial to the people in their present state." After enumerating the evil effects such experiments were likely to have, he opines, "the present system is probably not bad in itself as the country has prospered under it notwithstanding the feebleness and corruptness with which it was administered. At all events it is generally known and understood. It suits the people, whom indeed it has helped to form, and it probably is capable of being made tolerably perfect by gradual improvements introduced as they appear to be called for." So the Patil and the Mamlatdar continued to function, the Panchayets still met and deliberated under the village tree and the village community was granted a fresh lease of life. The shepherd tended his flock by the green hillside, the peasant reaped his harvest in the valley below, the artisan plied his ancestral trade within the village wall, unaware of the great political change that had taken place at Poona and Satara, while the revolution that was to overtake their secluded world crept on slow, imperceptible and unobstrusive. When the Patil was shorn of his power, the Panchayets made room for trained judges and the village communities became a vague memory, the Marathas had quietly beaten their swords into plough shares and had calmly taken to the peaceful avocations that Pax Britannica permitted. Elphinstone knew that patience and forbearance pay even in politics, that conciliation is a potent sedative while force frustrates its own purpose, that toleration, even of prejudices, paves the

way of reform far more surely than intolerance, and that real statesmanship avoids unnecessary haste, repression and intolerence, and takes a long view of things.

A PORTUGUESE ACCOUNT OF HAIDAR ALI

I

The Portuguese used to take a keen interest in their immediate neighbours. The Governors and Viceroys of Goa deemed it incumbent upon them to keep the home government well-informed about Indian affairs and political events of the slightest importance seldom escaped their notice, particularly when they were likely to affect their policy and plans. A Portuguese writer essayed an elaborate biography of Shivaji as early as 1695 and it is no wonder that a brief biographical sketch of Haidar Ali should be despatched to Lisbon soon after that Muslim adventurer had consolidated his authority at Seringapatam and extended his conquest to the confines of Phonda. Haidar reduced the principality of Sunda in December, 1763, and that exploit was duly mentioned in the biographical sketch which was enclosed in a letter, dated the 26th January, 1764. Evidently the writer tried to be up-to-date and probably his is the earliest account of Haidar Ali's career now available to us.

In 1764 Haidar was a power to be counted, but it is doubtful whether much was known about his childhood and youth. Col. Wilks had often

to depend on oral information when he compiled his monumental work and it is quite natural that the Portuguese writer should begin his account from Nanda Raj's alliance with Dupleix against Muhammad Ali and the English, for Haidar laid the foundation of his future greatness during that war. The narrative is exceedingly meagre, firstly because it was but an annexe to an official correspondence and secondly because sufficient materials for a detailed biography were not available at that date. Brief as it is, the account is not without interest to students of Indian History in spite of its occasional inaccuracies. It is here that we read for the first time that Nanda Raj's fall was precipitated by the infidelity of his white troops and Haidar's ultimate triumph over Khande Rao was partly due to the desertion of Muslim officers of the royal forces. Though Col. Wilks says nothing about the European soldiers in Nanda Raj's employ there is no reason to reject the Portuguese official version, for the commanding officer was a Portuguese himself and is mentioned by name. Nor is the story about the French escorts of that diplomatic prelate, the Bishop of Halicarnasus, unworthy of credence. That Haidar had no scruples about bribery and corruption is also well-known and the Portuguese account of his rise and progress is substantially correct. The conquest of Sunda is treated in greater details than in Wilks's *History of Mysore* because the king was, as the writer confesses, a much valued friend of the State and a close neighbour whom the Portuguese felt called upon to shelter in self-interest. In any case it is

likely to be of use as a true index of the Portuguese attitude towards Haidar Ali and their estimate of his character, ability, policy and methods. So far as I am aware this interesting " noticéa " has not yet been published either in original or in translation and I need not offer any apology for presenting it in its English version to the public. The translation is faithful but not literal. The original manuscript forms item No. 12 of Maço II, Officios dos Governadores in the Archivo Ultramarino of Lisbon, which I transcribed in September, 1926.

II

Information about the origins of a Moorish (Muslim) rebel, called Aidar and his rise till the acquisition of the title of Nabobo Aidar Ali Can and his (subsequent) progress and conquests.

This Moorish Nabobo is called Aidar. While serving in the troops of Ananda Raja,[1] prince of Maissur, general of the King of Sering Patan, he enlisted on his side some Moors, called Naiques, and styled himself as Aidar Naique.[2] Thereafter he was promoted on account of his services to the captaincy of a company of lancers called Pioens.[3] He continued his services with high appreciation

[1] More correctly Nanjraj or Nanda Raj, the Dalwai, who had usurped the authority of the Raja of Seringapatan and had his headquarters at Maisur.

[2] Haidar was called a Naik, like his father before him, because he commanded a small detachment. Sanskrit *Nāyaka* means a leader.

[3] Peons or footmen.

specially during the war of Trichinopoli [1] which the above mentioned prince declared against Mamodali Can, master of Arcate, on behalf of the French when M. Dupleix governed Pondicheri, whose protection he earned by his distinguished services to which he owed the honour of Anand Raja's confidence in his fidelity. The latter increased the troops [2] of Aidar Naique and entrusted to him the administration of his army and his entire principality.

Anand Raja did not know that in the comfort he found in Aidar lay his final ruin, the loss of his principality and all his treasures, much less (did) the King of Sering Patan (imagine) that his intimacy with his vassal would reduce him to the same state as the prince commandant of his forces when they would have no alternative but to submit themselves in mortal fear to the will of their servant.

The elevation of Aidar Naique to the despotic government of the kingdom of Maissur enabled him to conspire against the person and estate of his master and benefactor, for with this evil design he set to ingratiate himself with the King of Sering Patan and all the nobles of his court so that they might be propitiated while he worked against Anand Raja. Subsequently in 1759, having none to fear, he availed himself of the favourable times and

[1] The reference is to the second Carnatic War in which Nanda Raj first participated as a partisan of Muhammad Ali but later joined the French.

[2] Haidar was appointed Faujdar of Dindigal and his forces were considerably increased.

raised more troops with the money he extorted from the people.[1] He conquered strongholds and cities till he laid siege to the capital of Maissur, the residence of his master, who defended himself with incredible valour.[2] But Aidar through his negotiations with Bento de Campos, Portuguese commander of the white troops in the Anand Raja's service, induced him to desert (to the enemy) with all his following though the Commandant with the Pe. Fr. Amaro, a Franciscan devotee, had sworn to the miserable prince over an image of our Lady, the Virgin, which he used to keep probably as a secret Catholic, promising to comply with his prayers not to withdraw from his operations with the aforesaid white troops, and Anand Raja found himself compelled to capitulate to his vassal. This detestable treachery so much scandalised the whole kingdom that it animated even the confidante of Aidar, a Gentoo Bramene, Canda Rao,[3] by name, who privately protested to the King of Sering Patan that unless he immediately devised some remedy for such glaring infidelity he would himself be shortly reduced to the same miserable plight as his father-in-law and general, the unfortunate Anand Raja.

Impressed by this warning the King issued orders for the imprisonment or death of Aidar Naique, but as the secret of this important business

[1] A large sum was realised in 1759 to pay indemnity to the Maratha invaders.

[2] Nanda Raj was besieged at Maisur and defended himself for three months. It is to be noted that he had been compelled to resign his office before these operations.

[3] Khande Rao, a Maharashtra Brahman, was Haidar's Dewan and was mainly, if not wholly, responsible for his financial measures,

leaked,[1] the rebel succeeded in escaping from the clutches of the executioners of the royal court, whence he fled alone under cover of night with some thirty horses and four camels loaded with money and precious jewels. He sought refuge in the strongholds he had reduced above the defiles of Tripatur and Vanabari [2] and obtained shelter against all human expectations at Bangalur (which was) the capital of his conquests. All other districts, situated below those passes, were ceded to the Marata for the freedom of the army of Muctumo Saibu,[3] Aidar Naique's brother-in-law, whom Essagi Pant [4] had besieged in such a manner that he could neither relieve the strongholds nor escape out of his hands.

At this time the flourishing French settlement Pondicheri surrendered to the English who had waged against the French a prolonged war by land and sea. As Aidar Naique always entertained the design of persecuting his sovereign he easily secured to his side a detachment of the French troops commanded by Mr. Alen, which probably accompanied the Bishop of Alicarnasse,[5] who had gone up (the mountains) to conduct some negotiations with the

[1] According to Wilks, Khande Rao connived at Haidar's flight after openly firing on his camp.

[2] Both of these strongholds (Tripatore and Vaniambaddy of Wilks) are in the Bara Mahal Districts.

[3] Makdum Ali or Makdum Saheb.

[4] Visaji Krishna Biniwala.

[5] The Bishop of Halicarnassus, "a church militant prelate of doubtful history," negotiated an alliance between Haidar and the French of Pondichery, as a result of which Makdum Ali was despatched to co-operate with them. The Bishop afterwards visited the Maratha camp also probably to enlist their support for his principals.

neighbouring princes, as they had nowhere to go when they learnt of the loss of Pondicheri.

With these white troops and some three thousand men only Aidar Naique marched against his master, the King of Sering Patan, who offered him battle with an army of ten thousand men commanded by that Bramene, Canda Rao, who by his mature judgment had proved himself worthy of such confidence, but as the majority of the officers of that army were Moors, the astute and cunning rebel easily corrupted them with presents and promises, so that at the first encounter they put themselves into a precipitate flight leaving arms, artillery and all their retinue, and victory was declared for the fraudulent and rebellious Moor.

Finding himself master of the field Aidar Naique set to enlarge his force without the loss of a moment, and encamped before Sering Patan. He informed his master that it was his intention to obey him for he had always recognised him as his lord, but the only business that brought him to the field was to secure the freedom of his family whom he had left at the capital, and to make some demonstration with his subordinate Canda Rao that might serve as an example for others. However, he desired above everything to give him all personal satisfaction that might meet with his royal approval.

The king allowed himself to be deluded by the poisonous policy of Aidar Naique and enjoined him to come to his presence, but the rebel availed himself of this occasion to enter the city of Sering Patan with many troops, a few in his company, and

others in such disguise as might not create any suspicion of a surprise. All of them were instructed as to how they should take possession of the gates. Without any one daring to offer any resistance he took hold of the city and with it the entire kingdom of Sering Patan. For better security of this new conquest as well as that of the principality of Maissur he deprived his sovereign of all his rights and seized all his treasures.

As Aidar Naique became very opulent he enlarged his army of cavalry and Sipais and with nearly ten thousand men conquered the province of Marcassira [1] from Morarrao [2] and another province of the same name from the prince of Chicvalapur,[3] who submitted out of fright at the first clash of the war.

Subsequently having learnt that Bassalatjang, brother of Nizamali, Nabobo of the Deccan, had besieged the Marata stronghold Oscota,[4] Aidar Naique offered to assist that Mogol prince in that war at his own expense if the latter honoured him with the title of Nabobo of Sira, which favour was usually granted by the Mogol Emperor alone, with the allowance that the Nabobo of the Deccan also could honour any person who performed any remarkable deed with the same favour. The prince accepted Aidar Naique's proposal,[5] granted him the honour

[1] Merg Sera of Wilks.

[2] Murari Rao, Chief of Gutti, was a descendant of Bahirji, brother of the famous Maratha general Shantaji Ghorpade.

[3] Little Balipour of Wilks.

[4] Modern Hoskote.

[5] In fact the prince was not legally competent to confer any such honour, though the narrative is correct.

he sought, and personally went to visit him in his tent, but having captured the fort of Oscota, Aidar Naique entirely failed in his stipulations and kept the fort with all the artillery found there. Henceforth Aidar Naique styled himself as Nabobo Aidar Ali Can.

As he had declared war against the Marata he laid siege to the fort of Sira and took it without much resistance. Continuing in his marches and great good luck the Nabobo entered into the principality of Chitaldrug which he subjugated, collecting tribute without any resistance. At the same time he achieved the conquest of Tripatur and Vanabari which he had ceded to the Marata to secure the freedom of his brother-in-law's army of which we have treated above.

In this manner finding that a woman [1] with few troops ruled over the kingdom of Canara, in the neighbourhood of Goa, the rebel Nabobo fell upon that land of gold and reduced it perhaps with presents and promises,[2] with all its strongholds, fortifications and treasures which according to the firman amounted to the huge sum of three millions of pagodas, equivalent to twenty-four millions of xerafins, without anybody firing a single shot against his army; the unfortunate queen and the prince [3]

[1] Virammaji, widow of Baswappa Nayak of the Kiladi dynasty of Bednur.

[2] Haidar received valuable information from an ex-minister of Bednur, then in disgrace.

[3] Somasekhara.

she had brought up as the heir of the kingdom, could not help falling into his hands. For centuries together since the discovery of India this realm supplied Asia with all its rice, Europe with large quantities of pepper and China with sandals, which commodities these dominions produced in abundance. But this new conqueror forbids all nations the benefit of their provision of rice which is the universal food of the east.

The ambition of this fraudulent Nabobo is still greater than even his spirits, for, not content with vast conquests and a rich kingdom with excellent seaports, frequented by all the nations of Europe and Asia with the best articles of trade, he proceeded to devastate the country above the gates from the river Cusnam [1] to the defiles of Ponda, conquering and subjugating forts and provinces and rendering many potentates tributary on his way back to Bedrul, capital of Canara, now called Aidarnagar. While the Raja of Sunda,[2] a neighbour of his and ours, was negotiating with him for peace, the Nabobo himself suddenly entered into his territories and corrupted the fidelity of his vassals with a huge sum of eight lacks of roupies, took possession of his capital Sundem,[3] and in the same manner of all his strongholds. Not having met with any resis-

[1] The Krishna.

[2] Sawai Imadi Sadashiva.

[3] The capital bore the same name as the principality of Sunda, though the Portuguese spelt it differently.

tance he got down to Sivansara [1] which he reduced and the Gulf of Gales [2] with the forts of Piro [3] and Ximpim.[4] Only the fort of Ancola,[5] which is besieged, and that of Cabo de Rama,[6] on the frontier of our province of Salcete, stood on the defensive. The unhappy king, finding himself deserted by all his vassals and compelled to abandon all his realms, entered into our province of Ponda and sought refuge in that city which was conceded by Sr. Conde, Vice Rey,[7] for it would not be fair to omit to console with a cordial reception a king (in his affliction) who since the days of his sire and grandsires through the course of centures has ever been a much valued friend of the State.

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[1] The Portuguese were highly interested in this place, as they had a church and missionary centre here, which formed the subject-matter of a treaty in 1762.

[2] In the district of Karwar.

[3] Otherwise known as Sadashivgad.

[4] A small island with a fortress.

[5] On the coast south of Piro.

[6] Cape Ramas, now under Portuguese jurisdiction.

[7] Manoel de Saldanha de Albuquerque, Conde de E'ga, Viceroy from 1756 to 1765.

AN EARLY PORTUGUESE ACCOUNT OF BENGAL

The earliest Portuguese account of Bengal is probably to be found in a letter addressed by Dom Joao de Leyma, a Portuguese nobleman serving in India,[1] to His Highness the King of Portugal from Cochin on the 22nd December, 1518. Dom Joao submitted to his sovereign a brief report on the activities of the Portuguese officers in different parts of the east. He refers to Bengal, as that province was, for the first time, visited by an accredited agent of the Portuguese Government in India during the rainy season of that year. The letter has been preserved among the old archives in the Torre do Tombo of Lisbon and has not so far attracted much notice.[2]

Dom Joao de Leyma has something to say about the people of Bengal, their language and economic condition, and his account, though meagre, is not entirely without interest to a modern student of Indian history. The relevant portion runs as follows :

" Dom Joao,[3] my Lord, spent the last cold season in Bengal, where he wintered, being always

[1] Dom Joao de Leyma served with distinction under Alfonso de Albuquerque. In 1518 he was appointed Captain of Calicut. He died in 1570 in the defence of Chaul.

[2] So far as I am aware, the letter has not yet been published anywhere. Reference to this letter has been made in Danvers, *Portuguese in India*, Vol. I, pp. 343-344, but the portion relating to Bengal has been entirely omitted.

[3] Joao de Silveira,

in desparate war, without concluding any treaty of peace with them. The people, it is said, are perverse and feeble and they hid from him all the goods of the land. We are told that silver, coral and copper are highly prized there, but still no one wanted to buy any of these things, the reason, my Lord, was that some Gujrat boats were there and they caused all possible hindrance. The country is very rich, ten *fardos* of rice sell for a *pardao* of 320 *reis*, there being three *alqueires* in each *fardo* and the rice is *giracall*; twenty hens and as many as sixty ducks sell for a *tanga* and three cows per *pardao*; shells are the coins of this country, for none but the king can own gold or silver. The people are short and speak almost like those of Goa, this is because the coast of the Bay of Bengal is opposite to that of India. Bengal lies 20 degrees to the north which is the altitude of Diu. A slave is worth six *tangas* and a young lady double that sum. At the bar of this river, my Lord, there are three fathoms of water at low tide, which swells from three to six fathoms at high tide. The city is said to be two small leagues from the bar. The city is big and populous but very weak. Here was Dom Joao for five months awaiting the monsoon for returning to India."

It may be mentioned that the Portuguese word "inverno," in the above extract, could not possibly mean "winter," for Dom Joao must have returned to the Malabar coast, the "India" of the contemporary Portuguese records, before the letter was written in December. In the English records of the seventeenth century the term "winter" is invariably applied to the rainy season when the frail

country boats were reluctant to leave the safe shelter of the harbours and brave the dangers of the stormy ocean. Such indeed was the practice of the Portuguese as well. For them, Bengal was a different country from India, which consisted of the Malabar coast alone, while the subcontinent we now know as India was wrongly called " Asia." The letter, however, does not mention the name of the city visited by Dom Joao, nor does it specify the creek or river where he moored his boats. For these pieces of information we must turn to a third Joao, who immortalised the valiant deeds of his countrymen in his monumental *Decadas da Asia*.

Joao Barros gives in the third *Decada* a detailed description of the expedition to which Dom Joao de Leyma so briefly alluded. What his sources were we do not know, but much of the contemporary records and narratives has been lost for ever, and Barros is so definite and circumstantial in his account that we cannot lightly reject his evidence. In any case, he explains satisfactorily the hostile attitude of the Gujrat ships.

According to him, Bengal was visited in 1518 by Dom Joao de Silveira. He had been sent on a diplomatic mission to the Maldives by Lopo Soares de Albergaria, the fourth head of the Portuguese government in India. In those days Portuguese diplomacy in the eastern waters usually meant a free exhibition of the mailed fist, and Joao de Silveira was an apt pupil of da Gama and Albuquerque. On the high seas he met two ships on their way from Bengal to Gujrat and promptly seized them, though one of the boats belonged to a Muslim merchant

called Gromalle (Golam Ali?), a relative of the Governor of Chatigao, who himself was interested in the other. According to Silveira's way of thinking, they formed lawful prize and were forthwith sent to his official superior, Lopo Soares. From the Maldives he proceeded to Colombo, of which place he had previously been promised the Governorship. Next, he sailed for Bengal with four ships, one of which he commanded in person, while the remaining three had for their Captains, Tristao Borbudo, Joao Fidalgo and Joao Moreno. Silveira did not know much about the route and needed a pilot. With characteristic recklessness he pressed into his service a pilot from the very ships he had so wantonly captured and appeared in due course at the mouth of the Arakan river. The Portuguese sailors had never before been to these parts and they were well received by the people of Arakan who sought their friendship and amity. But Silveira had on board a Bengalee youth who introduced himself as a brother-in-law of the pilot. This youngman counselled the Portuguese commander not to have anything to do with the Arakanese as there was no good feeling between Arakan and Bengal. Silveira next sailed to Chatigao (Chittagong of the English), where the young Muslim, who had in the meantime ingratiated himself with Dom Joao, informed his countrymen about his misdeeds on the high seas. It is no wonder that the merchants of Chatigao refused to have any commercial transactions with the newcomers, who were no better than pirates in their eyes. Their suspicion was further deepened, as another Portuguese, Joao Coelho, had also arrived

at Chatigao. He had been sent on this mission by Fernao Peres d' Andrade, then on a cruise to China. That is why Silveira found the Bengalees so "perverse and fickle," and it was undoubtedly his sentiments that both Joao de Leyma and Joao Barros afterwards echoed. In any case, Barros is definite that Chittagong was the city that Joao de Silveira visited in 1518, and the river to which Joao de Leyma refers must, consequently, be the Karnaphuli. The town stands on the right bank of the river about twelve miles from the mouth.

It is interesting to note that the early Portuguese visitors should observe the linguistic affinity between the people of Bengal and those of Goa, though their explanation is not worthy of serious consideration. The Saraswat Brahmans of Goa claim to be the descendants of Bengalee immigrants. Like the Bengalees they rub their body and head with oil, and, unlike their neighbours of Maharashtra, freely partake of fish. One of their holy places, Chandranath, the mountain abode of Shiva, naturally reminds us of a hill of the same name in the Chittagong district which is still frequented by thousands of Bengalee pilgrims. The most popular deities are Shanta Durga and Nava Durga. The original image of Shanta Durga was, according to a popular tradition, transported by thirteen Brahman families from their old home in Trihut to their new settlement on the western coast. The Saraswat, like the Bengalee, is noted for the broad pronunciation of vowels, and in stature and look they are so alike, that if the Saraswat doffs his *pagota* (turban) or cap, or the Bengalee dons it, a stranger will find

it extremely difficult to distinguish one from the other. The *Konkani* language or dialect shares many words, expressions and idioms in common with Bengali. The story of Saraswat migration may not, therefore, be entirely unfounded, and Dom Joao de Silveira and his companions were quite right when they observed that the " people of Bengal are short and speak almost like those of Goa."

The Portuguese found Bengal an exceedingly cheap country, and the common medium of exchange in the market-place of Chatigao was the shell (evidently the cowrie shell). But it will not be safe to accept all their assertions at their face value, and it is difficult to believe that none but the King owned gold or silver. In their ignorance they thought that the governor of Chittagong was the sovereign ruler of the adjacent districts. The price list given in Dom Joao de Leyma's letter is, however, likely to prove useful to students of economic history, for very rarely did old travellers deviate from general remarks to detailed information about the current price of common commodities. An *alqueire* is a cubic measure for dry and liquid things, roughly equivalent to two gallons or 600 pounds, which, converted into Indian measure, will be about seven *maunds* and thirteen *seers*. The exchange value of *pardao* and *tanga* varied from time to time, and the purchasing power of a coin, whatever its denomination, has never been constant. The exact value of the *pardao* has not yet been ascertained, but we need not enter into a detailed discussion on that subject here. At the beginning of the sixteenth century a *pardao* was either half a *pagoda*, or equal to one *pagoda*, or 3½

Rupees. Sixty *reis* made a *tanga*; therefore, five to six *tangas* made a *pardao*. In modern parlance, the price list of Joao de Leyma will be as follows : 2 *mds.* of good rice for a *Rupee*, twenty hens and sixty ducks for about twelve *annas*, a cow for one *Rupee* and three *annas*, a slave for three *Rupees* and eight *annas* and a young female slave for seven *Rupees*. Apparently Bengal was the paradise of the poor.

The province enjoyed its reputation for plenty throughout the sixteenth century. Ralph Fitch, who visited Bengal seven decades later, found " Satagam very plentiful of all things." According to him, Bengal abounded in " rice wherewith they serve all India, Ceilon, Pegu, Malacca, Sumatra and many other places." [1] The French traveller Bernier visited the capital of Bengal about 1665. If popular tradition is to be credited, rice was much cheaper then and sold at the rate of six *maunds* per *Rupee*. The French traveller observed that foodstuffs were in general very cheap. He writes, " the three or four sorts of vegetables which, together with rice and butter (probably ghee), form the chief food of the common people, are purchased for the merest trifle, and for a single *roupie* twenty or more good fowls may be bought. Geese and ducks are proportionately cheap. There are also goats and sheep in abundance; and pigs are obtained at so low a price that the *Portuguese*, settled in the country, live almost entirely upon pork. In a word, *Bengale* abounds with every necessary of life." [2]

[1] Foster, *Early Travels in India*, pp. 26-28.

[2] Bernier, *Travels in the Mogul Empire* (Oxford Edition), pp. 438-439.

If twenty or more good fowls could be had for a *Rupee*, and rice and vegetables for the merest trifle, when Bernier wrote, it may be fairly inferred that the price level of 1518 was maintained at least for some of the foodstuffs till the middle of the next century. But neither the Portuguese sailor, nor the French traveller, enlightens us about the quantity of the staple food available *per capita* of the population of Bengal during the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries. But we must not grumble. When our sources are so scanty every scrap of information is thrice welcome.

A PEEP INTO THE DISTRICT RECORD ROOMS OF BENGAL

Every school boy knows how Clive laid the foundation of the British Empire in India at Plassey, how Mir Kasim's efforts to resuscitate the lost authority of the Nawab were frustrated at Gheria and Udhuanala, how the East India Company consolidated their power in Bengal by inflicting a decisive defeat on the joint army of the titular emperor and the Nawab Vizier of Oudh at the famous field of Buxar, and how conquest was finally reconciled with the theory of the emperor's suzerainty when Clive obtained for his masters the Dewani of Bengal. But the defeat of the Nawab did not necessarily mean the subjugation of the province he ruled. The powerful Zemindars had been long accustomed to sudden political changes at the metropolis. They did not care whether a Viceroy, appointed from Delhi, or an ambitious adventurer, unprovided with an imperial *sanad*, ruled at Murshidabad so long as their personal rights remained unaffected and their customary privileges remained untouched. Moreover, the weakness of the central executive had led to anarchy and chaos in the districts and the process of evolving order was necessarily long and tedious. The English officers had to deal with a set of fearless and resolute landlords who could command the implicit obedience of their

respective localities and the central government was not in a position to send them the necessary armed force. The task was rendered still more difficult by an unfortunate misunderstanding between the local executive and the local judiciary, the protection of the judge being frequently extended to the recalcitrant Zemindar. The history of this struggle still lies buried in the mouldering papers in the Distrct record rooms of Bengal. A few letters cursorily selected from two volumes of correspondence in the Dacca Record Room will amply illustrate the difficulties with which the English officers were confronted in the eighties of the eighteenth century.

In a letter, dated the 6th July, 1781, addressed to the Committee of Revenue, William Hollond of Dacca complains that his authority was flouted by a petty Zemindar. He writes: "I have received repeated representations from Ramdhun Chowdhry of Jalaulpore Nowarrah [1] that he cannot obtain quiet possession of that country by reason of opposition made by Ram Mohun an inhabitant of Bycuntpore who for many years has unjust possession of it. The Maljamin [2] also complains that he has not yet been able to collect any revenues. I furnished Ram Mohun (Ramdhun?) with a sepoy and a negabaun [3] but to no purpose, nor can I fear put him in full and quiet possession without taking more decisive measures then I am authorised to do, as Ram

[1] A fleet of boat maintained for state service, the expense being met out of rent-free grants.

[2] A surety for the payment of a demand, hence a revenue farmer.

[3] A guard.

Mohun appears to be assisted by the inhabitants of Bycuntpore."

In another letter, addressed to the Committee of Revenue on the 10th December of the same year, Mr. Hollond explains how lawless the Zemindars of Bhulua [1] had grown, and how inadequate were the military forces at his disposal to bring them to obedience. The letter runs as follows : " I have received your command of the 29th inclosing a letter from Mr. Cree relative to a contention attended with hostilities between. Nurnarain Chowdhry of Bullua and Ramgovind Chowdhry of Jugdea [2] for a piece of land bordering on Jugdea. I am not acquainted with the character of Ramgovind but Nurnarain is without doubt a notorious Dacoit. A force consisting of 50 or 60 sepoys was formerly sent to seize him but without effect and he has long been considered by Government as an outlaw. But notwithstanding this he still continues to retain some lands and a great share of influence in the purgunnah of Bullua and I cannot from the small force now at Dacca spare a fit detachment to act offensively against him,—and even if this were in my power he could with great ease elude their attacks by flight. I have therefore at present contended myself with sending and (*sic*) order to the farmer of Bullua to endeavour to entice him into his possession and in the event of his success, to send him under a guard to Dacca with which I have written to the Commercial Chief at Luckypore [3] to

[1] Now in the district of Noakhali.
[2] Now in the district of Noakhali.
[3] Now in the district of Noakhali.

furnish him. I have also summoned Ramgovind to Dacca and have sent a Dastuck [1] to attach the land which is the object of hostile contention between him and Nurnarain."

The attempt to arrest Narnarain proved futile as we find a reference to him in another letter of Mr. Hollond, dated the 11th October, 1782. This letter refers to the misdeeds of another turbulent Zemindar of the same locality who went so far as to rob two revenue boats of the Government. Mr. Hollond wrote: "I herewith transmit a petition presented to me by the Zemindars of Cudwa [2] which charges Sheochand a Zemindar of Bulluah with having robbed two boats laden with a considerable amount of Revenue that were coming from their Purgunnah. This Sheochand has long been considered as a noted dacoit. About three years since an accusation was laid against him before the provincial council for having murdered his uncle when some evidences were examined upon the subject and he was then made over to the Foujdary [3] by which Court I suppose he has been acquitted; but to me the evidences amounted almost to a proof of his guilt. The present petition seems to render vigorous measures absolutely necessary; for till this time the depredations of the most daring Dacoits have been confined principally to the poor and the obscure and they have refrained from molesting the public revenue upon the just supposition that it would give rise to a

[1] A warrant.

[2] Kadlia Bedrabad in the district of Noakhali.

[3] Criminal court.

more than ordinary vigilant search and investigation . . . . . for Nurnarain another Zemindar of Bullua who is also esteemed a noted Dacoit and has repeatedly refused attendance and even opposed the power of Government has been declared by Government to have forfeited his zemindary but he has notwithstanding still possession of it."

Such were the people with whom the Mufassil officers had to deal in those days of anarchy and disorder, and their difficulties were not a little enhanced by well-intentioned interferences from over-zealous judges. One letter will suffice to illustrate the complications caused by the misguided judiciary, and I shall again quote Mr. Hollond of Dacca who informed the Committee of Revenue: "A decree was passed in the adawlut [1] and afterwards confirmed in the Court of Appeals at Dacca before the establishment of the present system of Judicial Jurisdiction awarding a division of the purgunnah of Bhaudoorpore[2] into 5a-6g-3c proportion and 10a-3g-1c proportion, and an aumeen [3] was in consequence appointed so long since as September 1779 to make this division but that by reason of the excessive litigiousness of the Zemindars of the latter proportion and the many impediments they have thrown in his way he has not yet been able and I fear never will be able to complete it. Every other means having failed them of preventing the decree from being carried into execution they have now I

[1] Civil court.

[2] Bahadurpur Tappa, partly under the district of Backergunge and partly under Madaripur sub-division of the Faridpur district.

[3] Surveyor.

apprehend preferred a complaint to Mr. Wroughton Judge of the Adawlut at Backergunge, as that gentleman has I understand seized the aumeen, his servants and the sepoys that were stationed with him and detains them in confinement at Backergunge. As this conduct appears to me exceedingly precipitate and ill-judged I have thought it necessary to give you information of it with a view that such order may be issued to him as shall secure my servants and my own authority from suffering in future such ignominious treatment. But this is not the only instance in which Mr. Wroughton's conduct appears to me to be precipitate. One Ossman presented a petition to me setting forth that Cossiram and Rajahram Sein had granted him a Meerassy Ijarah pottah [1] for a parcel of land in Selimabad at a Meeskalhas Jummah [2] of Rupees 1,514-5-10, notwithstanding which being assisted by the Zemindars they exacted a greater revenue from him. I accordingly issued a summons upon Cossiram and Rajahram Sein which has been returned with a letter written upon the back of it by Mr. Wroughton." It may be noticed in this connection that Ram Ch. Chatterjee, the Amin in question, was sent by Mr. Wroughton to Calcutta for trial. He was defended by the Company's Attorney and released. His successor was, however, arrested by Mr. Wroughton and detained at Backergunge.[3] With the lawless Zemindars on the one hand,

[1] A deed of permanent lease or farm.
[2] An exclusive rent.
[3] Hollond to the Committee of Revenue, dated 30th August, 1781.

and the law fearing judges on the other, the Collector was verily between the Devil and the deep sea. But he faced these difficulties with commendable resolution and the lawless elements in Bengal were gradually eliminated. The history of this elimination forms the real history of the establishment of *pax Britannica* in Bengal. Until the mouldering manuscripts in the District record rooms are thoroughly scrutinised, our knowledge of the British conquest of Bengal is bound to remain incomplete.

The information that the District records can yield is not by any means confined to powerful landlords and power loving judges alone. For instance, we cannot attempt a complete account of the Naworah Mahal without a reference to the District Records. We read in a Dacca letter: "The tenants of almost the whole of the Naworah lands in this province when the Naworah became of no use, were held responsible for a stipulated number of labourers and artificers to be employed in the service of the public or of the natives of rank." We are further told that lands paying an annual rent of Rupees 1,532 had to furnish 17 bricklayers, 20 carpenters, 2 dandies,[1] and 1 turner. We find in another paper that the *Dhanderi Mahal* [2] of Backergunge was farmed to Pitambar Sen, grandson of the famous Raja Rajballabh, and a complete list of tax-paying professions has been preserved, although the *sanad* to which it was originally appended has been lost.

[1] Rowers.

[2] Profession taxes.

The importance of these records, it is hoped, has been sufficiently established, and it is needless to add that every care should be taken for their preservation. At present they are found scattered all over Bengal and the Provincial Government can hardly afford to appoint a trained archivist for every district. The Indian Historical Records Commission will render an invaluable service to the cause of historical studies in this country if they can suggest some effective means of concentrating these manuscripts at one convenient centre and making them easily available to the advanced students and teachers of Indian History.

GLEANINGS FROM SOME HOME DEPARTMENT RECORDS

In March, 1778, England declared war against France and the news was transmitted to India in due course. The British position had been firmly consolidated in Bengal since the battle of Plassey and when hostilities broke out the French were no match for their British adversaries in the province. Chandernagore was captured without any difficulty though Mons. Chevalier,[1] the French Governor, effected his escape. But there were scattered French factories throughout the province and individual Frenchmen held small trading posts in far off *ganjes* and villages. A general order was issued for their apprehension though they were not to be treated with unnecessary harshness. In those days of uncertainty it was felt that not merely Frenchmen but vagrant Europeans even of English domicile should not have a free run of the country. All Chiefs were directed, as we learn from a letter dated Murshidabad, the 9th August, "To seize and secure all Foreigners, not being the known dependants of the Danes and Dutch and all Vagrants of whatever Nation that is to say persons not having a regular Licence for their Residence in the country who may be found within the Limits of our Authority and transport them immediately to the Presidency under proper Guards." The order was executed and inventories of Europeans living in outlying places were

[1] Chevalier had according to later information fled to Orissa. *Calendar of Persian Correspondence*, Vol. V., Nos. 1014-15 and 1042-43; pp. 181 and 190.

made. The correspondence that followed throw some light on the economic condition of Bengal, and we find that some trading places of note have lost all their prosperity during the last one hundred and fifty years.

Here is an extract from a Murshidabad letter of the 10th August: "We think it our Duty to acquaint you that five large French Boats have been stopped at the Jellinghee one of 2,000 Maunds and the rest of 1,400 Mds. each. We are informed by the Manjee that they are on their way to Seebgunge to load with grain on the part of Mr. Chevalier; and that 16 Boats of the same Burthen belonging likewise to Mr. Chevalier were already arrived at the Place for the same purpose of taking in grain. We shall detain these Boats as well as those that are expected from Seebgunge if we meet with them until we are favoured with your Instructions regarding them." If the reference in the above extracts is to Shibganj in Dinajpur the place still retains some trade in grains but is no longer important enough to find a mention in the District Gazetteer. In 1778 it was apparently so well known that the Chief of Murshidabad did not deem it necessary to add anything more to its name to indicate its locality.

We read in another letter that the French prisoners were ordinarily put on their parole and their private belongings were as a rule restored to them with the exception of muskets, bayonets and cartouch boxes. The French had a *ganj* or market place at Sydabad near Murshidabad. The Governor-General-in-Council had so far no knowledge of its existence and enquired how the French could

found new markets and *ganjes*. The Chief and Council replied, " that in the Time of Jaffier Khawn the then French Resident at Sydabad purchased a Talook of about 65 Begas of land adjacent to the Factory. On this spot the Residents have from time to time erected a few shops in which are sold grain, tobacco, betel, etc., and though it hath obtained the Name of a Gunge yet it is in fact nothing more than a Buzar for the convenience of the Ryots of the Talook." Six Frenchmen were arrested at Sydabad. The chief was granted an allowance of Rs. 50 per month. His second and secretary received Rs. 30 and Rs. 20 respectively. The surgeon got Rs. 20, a private merchant Rs. 15 and a menial Rs. 10 only.

Although the French in most cases quietly submitted to arrest some of the so-called vagrants threatened trouble and we read in another Murshidabad letter (19th August), " We have just been informed by Colonel Morgan (a copy of whose letter we have the Honor to inclose) that a Suit is or will be commenced by a Mr. Cummings and a Mr. Colvil against the Brigade Major for performing this Duty and we also understand that Lawyers had actually been applied to who gave it as their opinion that an Action would lie." Probably nothing came out of this threat and it may be noted that the so-called vagrants were particularly obnoxious as they encroached into the close preserves of the East India Company and their employees and traded on their own account.

On the 22nd July Alexander Higginson, the Chief of Burdwan, reported that " Monsieur Durand

the French Resident at Caycolla (a small Factory about 16 coss distant from hence and eight from Chandernagore) has been brought into Burdwan by a party of sepoys dispatched by the Chief for that purpose." Durand however succeeded in obtaining a respite for winding up his business. From his letter to the Chief and Council it appears that his small establishment hardly deserved to be styled as a Factory. In any case we know from other sources that only four places in Bengal, Chandernagore, Kasimbazar, Jogdia and Dacca were recognised as such by the British authorities besides Balasore and Patna, then under the jurisdiction of the ruler of Bengal. In any case Caycolla or Canicola is no longer counted among the principal trading posts of Bengal. Durand's letter runs as follows:

"Sir and Gentlemen,

Agreeable to the orders of Mr. Higginson I came to Burdwan, I resided with my Family at Canicola for almost 5 years past where I employed a very small capital which scarce afforded me the means of supporting myself; I have at this Juncture dispersed it all, if you require me to go immediately to Calcutta I run the risk of losing all; I have beside left at Canicola, my Mother in Law, my Wife and my Daughter in the greatest Distress. I entreat you Sir and Gentlemen, to grant me 15 or 20 days to settle my little Affairs, I rely on your Generosity and Goodness."

Durand was placed on his parole and permitted to stay at Canicola till the 10th September. Enemy subjects seem to have been treated with considerable leniency and sympathy in those days.

The Chief of Dacca wrote that he received the Governor-General's order on the 12th July and " immediately took possession of the French Factory at Dacca and their House at Tisgong. The Factory has been for some Months wholly deserted, is in decay, and no Effects or property whatever in it. In the House at Tisgong which was in charge merely of two native servants, there is a small quantity of furniture.................. There was only one subject of France to be found in Dacca—a private merchant named Carret de la Veaufierre. He has been taken prisoner and released upon his Parole. A party has been sent off to take possession of the Jugdea Factory with Instructions, conformably to your orders. We have intelligence of some straggling Frenchman at Gualparrah, Sylhet and Sootaloory—we shall take measures for apprehending them."

Goalpara and Sylhet still retain their eminence but who can imagine to-day that Sootaloory, a small river-side village in the district of Backergunge with a lofty temple (*math*) as the only relic of its vanished glory, could harbour in its market place a French adventurer? Yet Sootaloory was in those days more important as a commercial centre than Backergunge and could boast of an English trading outpost.

Among the furniture seized at Tejgaon near Dacca are mentioned 8 prints with guilt frames and 11 China pictures. Evidently the French traders in the East had early appreciated the delicate beauty of Chinese painting and we would not be surprised if

some masterpieces of China had actually graced the walls of the garden house at Tejgaon.

It was afterwards reported that there was no Frenchman at Sylhet but a wide net had been cast and those at Goalpara, Jogdia and Backergunge were gradually gathered.

The French Factory at Jogdia deserves more than a passing notice. Jogdia is one of the most important Parganas in the district of Noakhali. The English had a Factory at Lakhipur in the same district. From a letter written in 1771 it seems that the French Factory stood in danger of being washed away and we do not know whether the site is still intact. Either to provide themselves against the probable effects of the erosion of the river or to extend their trading operations the French had in or about 1771 obtained possession of a suitable site for a factory at Chaudela (within Choddogaon) by fair purchase. On the 16th February one Sr. Mouton informed Mons. DesGranges, Chief of Dacca, " This instant is arrived from Choddogan a Burqundass who informs me that 20 Peons have been sent there from Luckypore to drive our people from Chaudela, the wright affrighted (*sic*) has fled and the Burqundass who were with him on the order they received to depart, having represented they could no (*sic*) do it without orders have required time to report the news here one of them was sent and is arrived.—Uncertain whether the Burqundass who remained will not be driven out before his return." Actually the French were ejected from Chaudela which they alleged they held in possession for several years by force major and the authorities

at Chandernagore formally lodged their complaints before the Governor-General-in-Council. They suspected "that this affair has been founded on the complaint of a Zemindar to your factory of Luckypore—That we have not paid him the rents. But if such is the person which has induced your chief of that District to take this violent step we would first ask him by what authority he has done it, in the second place have we ever refused paying the rent, assuredly not, since on the contrary M. DesGranges has at different times offered it to the Zemindar who has always answered him that he was not in a hurry and that he would receive all at once what will be due to him for this ground which we have purchased more than three years since by a very valid deed and we have now in our hands the Pottah or Title of delivery in due form." A copy of this letter was forwarded to the Chittagong Factory to which Luckypore was evidently subordinate and it was decided to "enquire of the Comptrolling Council of Revenue at Muxadabad how the French became possessed of this piece of ground in the Chittagong District after the caution given to the Nabob M. R. C.[1] in February, 1770, vide G. L. S. N." Apparently it was intended to check all further extension of French commercial operations in Bengal.

On the 27th July the Chief of Dacca reported the capture of the local French Factory. It is to be noted that M. DesGranges, the Chief of the French Factory at Dacca in 1771, was at Jogdia in

[1] Muhammad Riza Khan.

1778. The list of effects found at the Jogdia factory is as follows :

3,000 pieces of Baftaes,	Belonging to Mr. John Cree at Dacca.
1,000 pieces of Hummums,	
200 pieces of Towels,	
100 pieces of Table cloths,	
300 pieces of Baftaes	Do. Abraham Knight Do.
600 pieces of Baftaes	Do. Capt. Roman Do.
50 Bars of European Iron containing 25 maunds	Do. Mons. Carret Do.

Apparently Jogdia and its neighbourhood produced *Baftas* of a fairly good quality in the seventies of the 18th century, but alas! no one goes to Noakhali today for *Bafta* or cotton goods of similar quality.

A Dacca letter tells us that a French tailor was making his living by making shirts and other clothings at Backergunge. " Mr. Wood has siezed a Frenchman at Backergunge manufacturing shirts and other clothings for the soldiery with all his effects." There is no cantonment at Backergunge now and a French tailor will be as out of place there as in the Antarctic today. Yet there must have been a good volume of trade in those parts for we learn from another letter that a French snow used to visit the area every year through the Haringhata passage. J. Shakespeare of Dacca informed Mr. Wood that M. Chevalier might attempt to make his escape through the Sundurbans and asked him

to send "with Each Boat one or other of the Europeans who are at Backergunge promising them that the person who may be so fortunate as to apprehend Monsieur Chevalier will be very handsomely rewarded." Later a more definite announcement was made and a reward of Rs. 500 was promised for the apprehension of the fugitive French Commander.

The list of Europeans living within the jurisdiction of Dacca offers but few features of interest. One Mr. Peat was making his living as an Attorney at Law. There was an English Tailor, Francis Ford. Dacca probably offered a better market for his goods than Backergunge. Five people were real vagrants and had no ostensible means of livelihood. Narayanganj and Chandpur could boast of one Englishman each while there were three at Goalpara, two at Sylhet and no less than five, of whom one was a boat builder and contractor, frequented the now obscure Sootaloory and Backergunge.

The Chittagong list is probably more interesting. Of the eleven Europeans living there no less than six were of French extraction, two were German and one Italian. They represented various trades and professions. Simpson, the Englishman, was a tailor; Hemmen, the Frenchman, was a hair dresser; Noman, the German, described himself as a Harper; Nasau, the second German, served as coachman and the solitary Italian was probably a discharged valet (originally in the employment of Captain Forde). Buchastrine, a Frenchman, is considerately

described as an old man which may be a courteous synonym for a harmless vagrant. Two of the Chittagong Frenchmen, Echaud and Adrian, with Guillemeau, a compatriot of theirs, arrested at Tipperah, promptly renounced their nationality. Echaud addressed the following letter to Richard Sumner, Chief of Chittagong: "Sir, I take the liberty to inform you that since the age of twelve years I have took the English protection and have my fortune and family in this place and that I am extremely desirous to remain all my life under it if it is agreeable to the Government; and to take all suspicions, I am ready to take the oath necessary to affirm the same." Adrian wrote: "I am born a native a Frenchman but has been in the Englies King and Companys service for this 24 years during and fought Bravely for his Royal Majesty King George and the Dominions of the United Company Marchands." He added that he was still in the King's service and promised to serve him "with the Last Drops of my Blood and all ways behave a loyal subject." Apparently his loyalty to the English cause was far in excess of his knowledge of the English language. The oath of allegiance was duly administered to them and John Echaud, Martin Adrian and M. Guillemeau were restored to liberty and admitted to the rights and privileges of British citizenship.

Many of us are under the impression that records of the late Foreign and Political Department alone can throw fresh light on our country's past but the records of the Home Department also are replete with valuable information of all sorts. To

ignore them will be to leave one of the main sources of British Indian history unexplored.

The above article is based on (1) Home Department Public Consultations, dated the 3rd August, 1778, (2) Bengal Public Consultations, dated the 10th January, 1771 and (3) copies of records obtained from the India Office for the period 2nd January, 1778 to 28th October, 1779.

CONFLICT OF SOVEREIGNTY AT DACCA, 1819

After 1757 the French position in Bengal became, for all practical purposes, untenable. Theoretically their political status and commercial privileges remained unaffected but with the English predominance firmly established at Murshidabad they could hardly expect a fair dealing from the country power when their interests were in conflict with those of their English rivals. No doubt they still held their principal factories at Kasimbazar, Dacca and Jogdia besides their main settlement at Chandernagore, and small commercial establishments or lodges continued to function at far off Chittagong, in an obscure village called Connicole near Burdwan, at Tesgaon in the neighbourhood of Dacca and at Serampore probably under the shadow of Danish protection. Solitary Frenchmen were found all over the province, and in search of trade or adventure they penetrated even into the heart of Assam. But it was obvious that Plassey had ruined for good all prospect of French expansion in those regions and their presence in Bengal was more or less on sufferance of their political adversaries. In fact, whenever war broke out between the two nations in Europe the English took all the Frenchmen in Bengal into peaceful custody and the French

Factories were quietly occupied. More often than not the French traders resigned themselves good humouredly to the inevitable and came to amicable terms with the English authorities with a view to wind up their business with as little personal loss as the circumstances allowed. Sometimes a French adventurer would readily renounce his country and nationality to avoid temporary incarceration and the inconveniences it implied. In 1785 the head of the Dutch Factory of Chinsurá put a direct question to Nawab Mubarak-ud-Daulah and Md. Riza Khan about the status of the European traders in Bengal *vis-à-vis* the English under the new order of things and neither the Nawab nor his Deputy was in a position to answer so simple a question without any reference to the Governor-General and his Council. It was all the more strange, therefore, that in 1819, when most of the country powers had been constrained to recognise the *de facto* suzerainty of the East India Company and a masterful personage of Lord Moira's ambition and ability was at its helm, a Frenchman should aspire to revive the lost glories of his nation and claim to exercise in the name of his king and country sovereign authority in a limited area of the town of Dacca. Vain and belated as his attempts were Captain Darrac's pretensions deserve more than a passing notice, for they offer pointed illustrations of English preference for the logic of facts to legal fiction.

With the outbreak of the French Revolutionary war the French Factories in India necessarily changed hands. They were of little vital import-

ance to France so long as the English fleet commanded the sea, and, cut off from the mother country, they had no alternative but to yield to superior force. By 1814 the British position had been so firmly consolidated in India that at the conclusion of the Napoleonic wars England had no hesitation in restoring to France her Indian settlements which added to her prestige but did not contribute to her power. By Article VIII of the treaty of Paris His Britannic Majesty engaged to restore to His Most Christian Majesty the colonies, fisheries, factories and establishments of every kind which were possessed by France on 1st January, 1792, in the seas and on the continents of America, Africa and Asia with certain specified exceptions. Though the treaty was concluded on the 30th May, 1814, the French agent did not take charge of the old factory of Dacca before April, 1819, and then followed a series of unwarranted actions which left no doubt about Captain Darrac's conception of the rights and privileges of his office.

Mr. Master, the retiring Magistrate of Dacca, had some difficulties with Captain Darrac, the head of the newly restored French factory, about the boundary of the French area, which the latter regarded as French territory in the strictest legal sense. M. Darrac agreed to the limits indicated by his British colleague after reserving to himself the right of reopening the subject in future if he thought fit. The boundary, however, caused no further complication but Captain Darrac lost no time in revealing his real intention. The Factory obviously belonged to the

French and if the area demarcated by the British Magistrate of Dacca really formed French territory, then M. Darrac was, in law and in fact, entitled to exercise full sovereign authority on behalf of his King within the limits of the Factory, however small or circumscribed they might have been. The question was, were the British Government likely to tolerate such claims in the very heart of a district head quarter? Darrac was not long in putting his claims to test.

When the French Factory had been seized by the British as enemy property an inventory of everything found in the premises was duly made and the articles were in ordinary course sold by auction, the proceeds thereof being appropriated by the British authorities. But unfortunately Swarup Chandra Ghosh and Ram Ganga Sen, both residents of Dacca, were associated with the French Factory as Dewan and Gomasta respectively before its temporary dissolution. On the revival of the Factory Monsieur Darrac thought that these two ex-servants were liable to be called upon to render an account of everything that once belonged to the French and they were formally put under arrest. Whether they were seized within the compound of the Factory or outside its limits cannot be ascertained at this distance of time. M. Darrac contended that the arrest took place within his jurisdiction while the Magistrate of Dacca had his doubts about it. Darrac next called upon the Magistrate of Dacca to cause the houses of the arrested persons to be searched and to produce a witness at the trial which the

French Chief proposed to conduct. Mr. Bird, who had in the meantine succeeded Mr. Master, did nothing of the kind and requested M. Darrac to release the prisoners immediately. His letter drew an insolent reply. M. Darrac wrote: "In reply to the letter with which you have honoured me under date the 10th respecting 2 people name of (*sic*) Sooroop Ghose and Ramgunga Sein, I have the honour to remark to you that the detention of these two individuals to which you object is in no way illegal, and would not have taken place if it had been so. Little accustomed to infringe on the rights of others, I content myself with doing what my rights and my duties point out to me. These two persons employed by and responsible to the French have not been arrested on the English territory but on that of the French Factory for Crimes committed on the latter. They belong to my jurisdiction and are totally distinct from yours. Were they even free on the English territory it would be your duty to replace them in my hands on my demand, to be tried by me, in conformity with the article 23 of the convention at the Isle of France by the plenipotentiaries of the two nations on the 3rd April 1786 and article 9 of the convention at London on 7th March 1815 and ratified by his Most Christian Majesty and His Britannic Majesty. The demand that you make me to set them at liberty and which proceeds no doubt from your ignorance of the rights belonging to the French jurisdiction, cannot be admitted. The search on which I requested you to proceed or to assist me, might have been effected notwithstanding the guilty had their residence on

the English territory, in conformity with article 20 of the convention of Isle of France above cited, but having no wish to create dissension on this subject I preferred calling for your assistance. This search as well as the citation of the witness pointed out in my letter you cannot refrain without infringing the established custom of civilized nations and the different treaties between the two Governments to which we belong, besides, sir, you make yourself liable to the same conduct in cases which may occur." Mr. Bird of course held quite different views about his duties and obligations. He wrote: "The most regular mode for M. Darrac to have adopted would I conceive have been that of an application to me to enter upon an investigation and if during the enquiry I found it necessary to attach the property of the suspected persons."

Swarup Chandra Ghosh and Ram Ganga Sen were, however, private citizens. Before long a Government employee in the execution of his obvious duties fell a victim to M. Darrac's misconceived notion of rights. The Collector of Customs had his residence on the river banks. Two of his Chaprasis were carrying his Kachari boxes. On their way they encountered two weavers with smuggled thread and, as was their duty, arrested them. Unluckily they chose to follow a shorter route to the office which passed through a part of the French compound. One of the Chaprasis safely crossed this area with one of the weavers in his charge but the second man was arrested with the other weaver whose shouts of *Dohai Saheb* had

attracted Captain Darrac's attention. The Captain at once concluded that the Chaprasi had violated the sanctity of French territory and the frantic cries of *Dohai* implied nothing short of a formal application for French protection on the part of the weaver. The Chaprasi was administered " six stripes of the Rattan for having violated the French territory and having exercised there an authority which belongs solely to the Chief of the Lodge." Mr. Bird's protests brought forth another uncourteous reply couched in violent terms of insult.

A Sepoy chastised by the French Chief for a purely technical offence did not bring his case to the notice of his official superiors out of a sense of shame and for fear of losing prestige.

Captain Darrac was not, however, satisfied with these ostentatious demonstrations of French sovereignty in his corner of Dacca. He soon licensed a *Ganja* shop within the boundary of his Factory and there was talk of his opening a distillery and a liquor shop as well. These would adversely affect the excise income of the British Indian Government and add considerably to the policing difficulties in the main town by creating for the bad characters of the city a safe asylum and regular rendezvous. Mr. Bird, therefore, drew the attention of the Governor-General and Council to the pretensions of the French Chief and sought their direction on the subject. Apparently he was a less ardent student of old treaties than his militant French neighbour.

The Governor-General-in-Council promptly addressed the Hon'ble M. Ravier of Chandernagore

on the subject. They observed that "on general principles of national law we are satisfied that no establishment under the denomination of a commercial factory can be entitled to the exercise of a separate legal authority independent of the laws and regulations of the Government of the country in which it is situated. On the other hand the sovereignty of the British Government being expressly recognised throughout all parts of these Provinces excepting within the limits of the Territorial possession of the other European nations, it is equally our conviction that it was never the intention of the high contracting parties to the Convention of the 7th March 1815, to confound the distinction expressly preserved between those possessions and mere commercial Factories, or to confer on the Factories of His Most Christian Majesty in India those privileges of Independent jurisdiction which have not been admitted in favour of the other powers and are indeed withheld from Establishments of a similar description in other countries." M. Ravier was, therefore, requested "to instruct M. Darrac to abstain in future from the usurpation of powers which do not belong to his station and to confine the exercise of his authority to the mere superintendence of the commercial affairs of the Factory without interfering in any degree whatever in matters beyond the limits of his public duty."

It does not appear that the Chandernagore Government offered any reply to this letter but it is obvious that this firm protest gave quietus to M. Darrac's pretensions for ever and similar claims

were not revived in any other part of the province. In fact the French Factory at Dacca was abandoned for good in a few years, and when in 1824 Lord Amherst offered to purchase the buildings on behalf of the East India Company M. Pelssier politely stated that a French subject had already solicited the lease of the Factory and its buildings but as the previous lessee was in adverse possession of the Factory an appeal had been made to the Court at Dacca. Thus within five years of M. Darrac's assumption of the charge of the Dacca Factory were all his unwarranted claims tacitly repudiated by his own countrymen.

It may be noted here that in 1821 the French, the Dutch and the Portuguese made similar claims at Surat on the strength of Farmans they had received from the Mughal Emperors in days gone by. But the Governor-General held that " the Mogul grants are not permanently binding on the British Government " and whatever privileges the French and the Dutch might have acquired from such grants were destroyed by the military conquest of their settlements and factories but the Portuguese stood on a different footing and in their case a special revocation of their privileges should be made.

Such claims as the French made at Dacca in 1819 and at Surat in 1821 were due mainly to the British recognition of the Emperor of Delhi and the Nawab of Murshidabad as *de jure* rulers. So long as they enjoyed the substance of power they did not mind if there were legal anomalies here and there and the fiction of Mughal sovereignty continued

practically unchallenged long after the Emperor had become a mere pensioner of the East India Company and the fiction of Nizamat in Bengal survived until the Nawab of Murshidabad was persuaded to part with that titular dignity.

The above article is based on the following records : (1) Foreign Department Proceedings, dated 21st May, 1819. (2) Foreign Department Proceedings, General B, January, 1866, Nos. 97 and 98. (3) Foreign Consultations, 11th March, 1824, No. 3.

For the letters of Gregorius Herclots, Chief of Chinsurah Dutch Factory, to Nawab Mubarak-ud-Daulah and Muhammad Riza Khan, see *Calendar of Persian Correspondence*, Vol. VII, Nos. 297 and 299, pp. 91-92.

A NOTE ON FREI MANOEL DA ASSUMPÇAO

Though the Bengali works of Manoel da Assumpçao have of late received some notice, we know as yet next to nothing about him and his colleagues. We learn from his publications that Evora in Portugal was his native city, that he was the head of the St. Nicholas Tolentino Mission in Bengal and that he had his head quarters at Nagari near Dacca. The biographical dictionaries of Barbosa Machado and Innocencio Francisco da Silva have nothing to add to this very meagre information. It is, therefore, with great satisfaction that we note that Sr. Ricardo Michael Telles has unconsciously contributed, however briefly, to our knowledge of the great Portuguese missionary's life in an article on the convent of the St. Augustinians recently contributed to a Goa journal.[1]

The Augustinian monks arrived at Goa as early as 1572 and built a modest convent the same year on Monte Santo. Their order did not lack in wealth or influence and counted some of the Archbishops of Goa among its members. Twenty-five years later a convent of more ambitious dimensions was built on a magnificent scale and a historian of Goa observes with evident pride, " Few cities in Europe can boast of a finer edifice of the kind." It received appreciating notice from many distinguished travellers and Dr. Buchanan was particularly impressed

[1] *O Oriente Portugues*, No. 26, 1939.

by its library and the interesting botanical specimens preserved in the adjoining garden. In course of time a college and seminary were attached to the convent and a list or book of the novices was compiled from the 28th of April, 1705, at the instance of Frei Antonio de Pilar. This list has been appended to Sr. Telles' interesting paper. Luckily the compiler did not omit from his list those monks who began their apprenticeship at Lisbon and we thus come across a brief note on Frei Manoel da Assumpçao. There cannot be the least doubt about his identity, for reference has been made to his residence in Bengal. We learn from Frei Pilar's " livro " that Manoel became a novice on the 31st March, 1722, and he died in Bengal in 1764. When he arrived in India we do not exactly know, but obviously he must have spent some time at the Augustinian head quarters at Goa before he transferred his activities to Bengal. While a layman, Manoel was called Miguel Roballo (*sic.*). His father's name was Pedro Gonsalves Reballo and his mother was Caterina de Matos. They belonged to Villa de Toro Guarda at the time of Manoel's ordination, but as he describes himself as a native of Evora, either they might have lived in that city sometimes earlier, or Manoel must have spent the major part of his early life and received his education there, for Evora was an arch-episcopal city and a University town. That is all that the list of novices, brought to light by Sr. Telles, tells us, and scanty though the fresh information is, it indicates a line of enquiry which may now be pursued. Manoel, we are told, died

in Bengal forty-two years after he took the orders and twenty-one years after the publication of his grammar and catechism. Very probably he passed away at Nagari and was most likely buried there. The St. Nicholas Tolentino Mission is still in existence and has a church and school at Nagari, and a search may be made among the old ecclesiastical records, if any still survive, for further information about Manoel, and in the local graveyard for his last resting place.

It may be noted here that the list also mentions another monk, Frei Ambrosio de St. Agostinho, to whom we are indebted for an early account of the Mission of St. Nicholas Tolentino and its founder Dom Antonio do Rozario, a Bengali convert and author of an old Bengali prose dialogue, the earliest work of its kind, so far known. Ambrosio apparently began his noviciate in the Augustinian seminary at Goa on the 15th March, 1706. Son of Joaquim Esteves de Abreu and Maria Nunes of Lisbon, Ambrosio was known by the name of Antonio Nunes de Abreu before he renounced the world. It is now evident that Ambrosio and Manoel were contemporaries, though the latter was some sixteen years junior to the former. As Ambrosio came to India early in 1706 and went twenty years later to preach in Bengal, it is quite likely that he came across some of the junior contemporaries of Dom Antonio, as there is an interval of sixty-three years only between Dom Antonio's enslavement in Arakan and Frei Ambrosio's arrival in Bengal. We can, therefore, accept his account of the St. Nicholas Tolentino Mission and Dom Antonio do

Rozario as fairly authentic if the miracles and supernatural incidents, in which he readily believed, are excepted. It is fairly certain that the Portuguese version of Dom Antonio's *Argumento e Disputa*, to which Ambrosio refers, could not be the work of Manoel da Assumpçao who began his noviciate at Lisbon on the last day of March, 1722. But it is quite conceivable that the manuscript, which Ambrosio saw during his residence at Nagari, was still in existence when Manoel joined the Mission in Bengal, and was used by him for the preparation of his text and translation.

A careful examination of the Augustinian records at Goa may throw more light on the life and work of Manoel da Assumpçao.

POSTAL REFORMS OF WARREN HASTINGS

A century ago the penny postage was established for the first time in England and the memory of Sir Roland Hill is to-day gratefully cherished not only by his countrymen but thousands of admirers all over the world. It was to Hill's careful calculation that we owe a uniform and cheap rate of postage that leaves distance absolutely out of account and the current system of payment before posting by means of a tiny " list of paper just large enough to bear the stamp, and covered at the back with a glutinous wash " was also devised by him. Great as Hill's achievements were, we should not forget that another great Englishman tried to anticipate some of his reforms in India as early as 1774. In a minute, dated the 17th January (now in the keeping of the Imperial Record Department, New Delhi) Warren Hastings evolved a scheme of postal reforms that deserves more than a passing notice. As in England, privileged persons in India also enjoyed the right of sending their letters free of postage and Hastings complained that " the present Management of the Dauks is attended with many Inconveniences. Private Letters are exempt from Postage and the whole expence of the Establishment falls upon the Company." The total expenditure under this head, according to the Governor (for the rank and dignity of Governor-General had not yet been conferred on him), amounted to Rs. 1,78,796-2-7 excluding " The expence of Houses for the accommodation of the Dawks, of Boats Oil Massal etc.,"

" in Dacca, Midnapore and other Districts in Bengal." Moreover, as Hastings proceeded to point out, " the Establishment is involved in a Labyrinth of Obscurity without Checks and without System. The Delays on the Road are often greater than those of common Cossids or Cowriers without a Possibility of correcting them because it cannot be known by whom they are occasioned. Of these delays the President himself has had repeated Proofs in so much that whenever he has had occasion for extraordinary Dispatch, he has made use of express Cossids and these never failed to exceed the regular Dawks by nearly half the space of Time employed by the latter for the same Distances." Warren Hastings was not a man to put up with unnecessary expense and avoidable delay. He at once set to devise a scheme that would at once secure economy and expedition.

His " plan of a new establishment of Dawks and of a general Post Office " was based on three simple principles :

(1) " That all letters shall Pay Postage, excepting such as are on the Public Service."

(2) " That private letters should pay a moderate postage and the different parts of the country should be brought under one uniform system."

(3) " That the Postage on inland Letters shall be paid when put into the Office, at the following Rates :—

Single Letter for every Hundred Miles—2 annas.

Double Letter in Proportion according to their Weight. Obviously Warren Hastings realised the

utility and advantage of advance payment of postage. He had, in fact, suggested the same remedy as Hill did six decades later for avoiding delay in delivering and taxing letters and he was also in favour of a cheap and uniform rate. Here, however, Hill's proposals were more scientific and far-reaching than those of Warren Hastings. He was not prepared to ignore distance as one of the main factors in transport expenses. Considering the condition of roads in those days we cannot blame Hastings if he suggested that the rate of postage should vary with distance. But he partly anticipated Hill, if not expressly, at least by implication, when in framing his schedule he ignored for all practical purposes all distances less than one hundred miles.

Hastings did not think of adhesive stamps but he did suggest tokens of a different kind for the convenience of the general public. Two of his proposed rules provided : " That all Letters shall be stamped with the Day of the Month on which they are delivered into any Chief Office." " That for the facility of paying the Postage on Letters small Copper Tickets be immediately struck to be received at the rate of Two Annas each but to pass only at the Post Office." Apparently the public were expected to buy these small copper tickets and the letters were to be received at and stamped by the Post office when these tokens were presented. It may be incidentally noted that, like Hill, Hastings also foresaw that with the introduction of cheap postage, " the Post office now a heavy Burden may in time become a Source of Revenue to the Company," and the popu-

larity as well as prosperity of the present Postal department bear ample testimony to Hastings's uncommon foresight.

We may conclude by quoting in extenso the specific recommendations of Warren Hastings regarding the proposed Postal establishment which would bring the different parts under one uniform and general system :—

1st. " That the Dawks be formed into four Divisions as follows :

1st Division from Calcutta to Ganjam.
2nd Division from Calcutta to Patna.
3rd Division from Patna to Benares, and to such farther Distance as may be hereafter determined.
4th Division from Calcutta to Dacca.

2nd. That no Dawks be appointed to the Cross Roads (excepting Dinagepoor) as hereafter mentioned but Cossids only occasionally employed by the Provincial Councils and Collectors, to convey the Letters to the nearest stages of the Dawks; the Pay and other charges of these Cossids to be transmitted Monthly to the Post Master General, whose Office will be hereafter described.

3rd. That as the Military Operations in Cooch Beyhar require a constant and regular Correspondence, a Cross post be established between Dinagepoor and Rajemahal and that it remains for future consideration whether it will be necessary to establish a Cross post from Burdwan on the Assembling of the Council at that Place.

4th. That three Hircarrahs or Dawks, one Massalchy and One Drum, be appointed to each stage, *viz.* :—

	Miles	furl.	stages	Hircarrahs	Massaul	Drums
From Calcutta to Ganjam	358	4	42	126	42	42
,, Calcutta to Patna	398	6	48	144	48	48
,, Patna to Benares	165	4	19	57	19	19
,, Calcutta to Dacca	179	4	21	63	21	21
Cross Road from Dinagepoor to Rajemahal.	77	...	9	27	9	9
Total ...	1,179	2	139	417	139	139

For the particulars of these stages see the Book of Roads laid before the Board for their Inspection.

5th. That a Moonshy be fixed at each Capital stage, who shall have charge of a certain Number of stages, *viz.* :—

	Moonshy	Stages
1st from Calcutta to Narrangur ...	1	10
Narrangur to Ballasore ...	1	7
Ballasore to Cattack ...	1	12
Cattack to Ganjam ...	1	13
	4	42
2nd from Calcutta to Moorshedabad ...	1	14
Moorshedabad to Rajemahal ...	1	9
Rajemahal to Mongheer ...	1	13
Mongheer to Patna ...	1	12
	4	48
3rd from Patna to Buxar ...	1	10
Buxar to Benares ...	1	9
	2	19

4th from Calcutta to Rajapoor	...	1	10
Rajapoor to Dacca	...	1	11
		2	21
at Dinagepoor	...	1	9
In all Moonshy	...	13	

6th. That two Gurree Wallas, or Time Keepers be appointed with each Munshy for the purpose of determining the arrival of each packet, which shall be written on the Outside of the packet, and an Account thereof with the time of the last Dispatch kept by the Munshee.

7th. That a Deputy Post Master be appointed with the following Establishment of Servants at the following Stations, who shall have Charge of all the Stages from the Presidency, on the next Station preceding him to the Place of his Residence, pay the Moonshees Charges dependant on him, take an Account of all Letters received and dispatched, receive and issue Letters, transmit his Account and reports to the Post Master General, and receive his orders.

Establishment:		Deputy.	
at Moorshedabad	.	1	10 Peons
Patna	...	1	10 ,,
Benares	..	1	2 ,,
Ganjam	...	1	2 ,,
Dacca	...	1	2 ,,
Dinagepoor	...	1	2 ,,
		6	28

8th. That a Post Master General be appointed at Calcutta with one Deputy, one Merda or native

assistant, seven sorters, one Jamadar and fifteen Peons for Distributing Letters. He will have the Control of the whole Establishment, and all the Accounts will be brought into his Office :—

The whole Establishment then will be as follows :—

Hircarrahs	... 417	@ Rs. 7	per month		2,919
Massalchees	... 139	@ Rs. 3	,,		417
Drums	... 139	@ Rs. 3	,,		417
Oil Massalls, House rent, and Drums to be paid by the Moonshy	... 139	@ Rs. 6	,,		834
Munshees	... 13	@ Rs. 30	,,		390
Gurry Wallas	... 26	@ Rs. 4	,,		104
Deputy Post Masters	... 6	@ Rs. 100	,,		600
Peons with Do.	... 28	@ Rs. 4	,,		112
Post Master General	...		...	500	
1 Deputy	...		...	250	
1 Naib or Merda	...		...	100	
2 Writers	...		...	200	
1 Jamadar	...		...	20	
15 Peons @ Rs. 6	...		...	90	
1 Head Sorter	...		...	10	
6 Under Sorters @ Rs. 5	...		...	30	
Candles, Wax Gurrahs, Stationery, &c.			...	109	
					1,300
Boat Charges as Per Account to be hereafter adjusted, estimated at the highest supposed rate	...		...		1,000
					8,083

Which amounts per annum to Rs. 96,276

Bye Rules.

1. That all Letters shall pay postage, excepting such as are on the Public Service.

2. That the postage on inland Letters shall be paid when put into the Office, at the following Rates :

Single Letters for every Hundred Miles—
2 Annas.
Double Letters in Proportion according to their Weight.

3. That Letters coming by Sea, or from foreign settlements shall pay on Delivery, and be rated at ½ postage.

4. That a Table of postage formed according to the above Rules, be affixed at the Different Offices for the Public Inspection.

5. That the post office in Calcutta shall be open from ten o'clock in the morning till One, for the Delivery of Letters; and from Six till Nine in the Evening for the receipt of Letters.

6. That a daily Account of the Number and Weight of Letters dispatched, with the Amount of Postage be kept at each Office; that a Monthly Account be transmitted to the Post Master General by his Deputies and that a general Abstract of the whole Receipts and Disbursements be laid before the Board every Month.

7. That the Letters when received into the Offices shall be sorted, and put up in separate Bags for the different Stations, together with a Note of the number in each.

8. That all Letters shall be stamped with the Day of the Months on which they are delivered into any Chief Office.

9. That for the Facility of paying the Postage on Letters small Copper Tickets be immediately struck to be received at the rate of Two Annas each but to pass only at the Post Office."

We do not know whether this recommendation was accepted in toto by the colleagues of the Governor for our records are incomplete but from papers of a subsequent date it appears that a Post Master General was appointed and steps were taken to build and purchase houses for Post Offices in different parts of the Country.

Warren Hastings will be remembered not only for his achievements but also for much more that he tried to achieve.

18—1328B

" STEAM " JOHNSTON

James Henry Johnston[1] was a fairly well known person in his days. Lord William Bentinck thought highly of him. He used to dine with the Lord Bishop of Calcutta and had the distinction of owning a nickname.[2] After his death his friends and admirers provided a memorial tablet in St. Stephen's Church at Kidderpore,[3] and the *Dictionary of National Biography* placed him on the roll of the immortals by awarding him half a page.[4] " Steam " Johnston did more than any of his contemporaries to popularise steam navigation in India. But fame played him false and his is a name quite unknown or slightly known to-day.

Born in 1787, J. H. Johnston entered the Royal Navy in 1803 and had the proud privilege of participating in the famous naval battle of Trafalgar. Placed on half pay in 1815, Johnston had to leave home in search of a career elsewhere. He repaired to India in 1817 and through the influence of his friends obtained command of the *Prince Blucher*.[5]

1 Lord Clare, Governor of Bombay, in a letter to Wilson of Calcutta calls him Johnson (*Bengal Past and Present*, Vol. II, Part I, page 131). In the memorial tablet at Kidderpore also he is called Johnson (*op. cit.*, p. 141) but in the official papers he is invariably called Johnston and he subscribes himself as such in his official correspondence.

2 *Bengal Past and Present*, Vol. II, pp. 24-26.

3 *Ibid*, p. 141.

4 Vol. XXX, p. 66.

5 *Ibid.*

In 1821 he tried in vain to found a sailors' home at Calcutta but the patronage of the Marquis of Hastings secured him two lucrative appointments in quick succession. He could not assume the duties of either, for urgent business demanded his presence at home, and there he had to go without the least delay.

When Johnston reached London a scheme for floating a General Steam Navigation Company was already in the air. A public meeting had been called at the instance of Mr. Joliffe and Johnston was nominated on the committee appointed in that connection.[1] He threw himself heart and soul into the scheme and his investigations convinced him of the practicability of effecting steam communication between Great Britain and her Indian territories by the Mediterranean, though the Suez was still an isthmus. In a pamphlet he worked out the details of his plan and expressed the hope of completing the double voyage from England to India and back in one hundred and twenty days. The scheme, however, did not make much headway and failing to convince the business men of England Johnston came once more to India to enlist the financial support of the European merchants of Calcutta. He received but a poor response and the necessary capital could not be raised.

Though Johnston had failed in his principal mission his troubles did not go altogether unrewarded. He succeeded in creating a public interest in

[1] G. A. Prinsep, *An Account of Steam vessels and of Proceedings connected with Steam Navigation in British India*, Calcutta, 1830, pp. 5-6.

his favourite subject and the citizens of Calcutta decided at a public meeting, held at the Town Hall on the 5th November, 1823, to raise by subscription a sum of one lakh of Rupees to reward the first successful double voyage by steam completed within 140 days either by the Cape or the Suez route, provided it was effected by the 31st of December, 1826.[1] A single journey either way, completed within 70 days before the expiry of the stipulated date, would entitle the successful Captain to half the sum. Eventually the expected sum could not be collected, and only Rs. 69,903-12-5 were raised. But the lure of the prize had caught three persons—Taylor, Maudeslay and Gordon, and a boat was already under construction when Johnston reached London. He readily joined the venture, and as Taylor finally withdrew from it, the business was once more confined to three partners.

The new boat, launched from the dockyard of Messrs. Gordon and Co. in February, 1825, was christened the *Enterprise*, and Johnston set out on his quest from Falmouth on the 16th August to reach Diamond Harbour on the 8th December, 113 days later.[2] From the very first it was evident that the *Enterprise* could not possibly qualify for the prize. Johnston, contrary to his previous plans, had been persuaded to follow the Cape route and the coal supply was particularly unsatisfactory. The *Enterprise* did not steam all the way from England to India; the Captain had recourse to canvas whenever he was unable to feed his engines for lack of

[1] Prinsep, *op. cit.*, p. 6.
[2] Prinsep, *op. cit.*, pp. 7-9.

fuel. The *Enterprise* was not the first steam boat in India. As early as 1819 a toy steamer had been built for the Nawab of Oudh with an imported engine, and in 1823 the *Diana* plied in the Ganges as a passenger boat to the great wonder of the country people.[1] But the importance of Johnston's achievements should not be minimised on that account. He had demonstrated to the satisfaction of every body concerned that steam communication could be established between England and India even by the longer routes, and from 1825 commences his real career in India.

As a commercial proposition the prospects of the *Enterprise* were far from bright. It was evident that as a passenger boat she could not expect to pay her way, but luckily for the owners the Government of India had realised the utility of steam boats in their war with Burma. The *Diana*, though a commercial failure, had rendered an excellent account of herself as a transport and messenger ship. The achievements of Captain Johnston had early attracted the notice of Lord Amherst's Government. Seven days after his arrival at Diamond Harbour he received from the Government a letter of warm congratulations in which it was unambiguously stated that the Government expected "the most beneficial consequences to the state and to the commercial world from the active prosecution of the new system

[1] Prinsep, *op. cit.*, pp. 3-4; W. H. Carey, *The Good Old Days of Honourable John Company*, pp. 18-19. Messrs. H. O. and A. Robinson are obviously wrong when they assert (*Account of some Recent Improvements in the System of Navigating the Ganges by Iron Steam Vessels*, London, 1848, p. 22) that "Captain Johnston brought the first steamer ever seen in India round the Cape."

of navigation which you have introduced into these distant seas."[1] The reference to the benefits that the state might derive from the exertions of Captain Johnston was not without a special significance. On the 12th December, or only 4 days after the arrival of the *Enterprise*, the Governor-General in Council had resolved that " Adverting to the great advantage to the public service to be derived from the employment of a steam vessel during the present war with Ava the Governor-General in Council is of opinion that it will be highly desirable to purchase the *Enterprise* steam vessel which has just arrived from England."[2] The Hon'ble Mr. Harrington was not in favour of purchasing the boat outright. He suggested that the Government might hire the *Enterprise* for six months at the rate of 25,000 Sicca Rupees per mensem.[3] But Captain Johnston on behalf of the Committee for the management of that vessel refused to let her on hire. He was prepared to sell the *Enterprise* for £40,000 or Rs. 400,000 to be paid in England.[4] The question was naturally referred to the Marine Board and they observed that " for speed and certainty of despatch......we cannot but feel that her services would be invaluable and deserving liberal remuneration." They calculated that the establishment charge of the ship would amount to Rs. 14,000 per mensem independently of the salary of the commander, but as " much of

[1] Home Dept. Public Cons., 15th Dec., 1825, No. 11. Johnston's reply to the above, dated Dec. 1 (Home Dept. Public Cons., 22 Dec., 1825, No. 9).

[2] Home Dept. Public Cons., 15th Dec., 1825, No. 8.

[3] Home Dept. Public Cons., 15th Dec., 1825, No. 9.

[4] Home Dept. Public Cons., 22nd Dec., 1825, No. 8.

the success must depend upon him," they recommended that the services of Captain Johnston should be retained. They also laid down that the *Enterprise* should be purchased on condition that " her services shall be rendered immediately available by the assent of the Engineers to enter into engagements to continue in their present situations for a given length of time.'"[1]

On the 18th December the Governor-General expressed himself in favour of purchase and Messrs. Harrington and Bayley concurred with him.[2] It is needless to add that military exigencies satisfactorily explain the expedition with which the negotiation was concluded on behalf of the Government and the *Enterprise* promptly changed hands.

The running expense of the *Enterprise*, however, considerably exceeded the estimate of the Marine Board. One of the three Engineers refused

[1] Extract from Public Original Cons., 22nd Dec., 1825, No. 2.

Commander.

8 Officers	1	...	...	...	150	
	2	...	...	...	120	
	3	...	...	...	100	370
2 Engineers @ 300		...	...	...	...	600
Carpenter		...	...	...	...	100
Six superior Sea Cunnies		...	...	...	20	120
40 Lascars		...	...	...	10	400
Cook—Servants, etc.		...	...	...	...	100
Wages without Commander		...	...	...	...	1,690
Victuals		...	...	...	...	500
Stores and Sails		...	...	...	...	1,500
Coals per calculation		...	...	...	...	4,320
Interest on 400,000 Rs. @ 5 per cent.		...		...	...	2,000
Wear and Tear—10 per cent.			...	...	...	4,000
						14,010

[2] Home Dept. Public Cons., 22nd Dec., 1825, Nos. 5-7.

to serve in India and the other two demanded a salary of Rs. 500 per mensem and they had to be employed on their own terms.[1] The Marine Board recommended the appointment of Captain Johnston on Rs. 1,000 per month. Besides this, he used to get a sum of Rs. 180 as table money. Captain Johnston's salary and allowances were fixed at a liberal scale in view of his special knowledge, for when a year later two officers of the *Enterprise* were selected to command the newly built *Irawaddy* and the *Ganges* a salary of Rs. 400 only was sanctioned.[2] Mr. Wall, Commander of the *Hoogly,* drew Rs. 160 only per mensem in 1833.[3] The total establishment charge of the *Enterprise* in salary and allowance alone amounted to Rs. 4,442-2-0.[4]

1 Home Dept. Public Cons., 22 Dec., 1825, No. 4. The Engineers also got table money at the rate of Rs. 2 per diem.

Firstly.—They engage to bind themselves to serve on board the *Enterprise* as Engineers, doing the duties which they have done on the passage out and no other for a period of twelve months, unless prevented by sickness, to be evidenced by medical certificate, at a monthly salary of Sicca Rupees five hundred (Sa. Rs. 500) with provisions to be found them by the Government.

Secondly.—That they are to be considered as permanent officers and to be continued on their salaries if sick under medical certificate, and should it be necessary for them to be removed on shore for the benefit of their health, that lodgings or house rent, as well as a fair sum for victualling themselves, unless they are victualled at lodgings provided by Government, should be accorded them.

Thirdly.—In case of being obliged to return home at any time during the twelve months from sickness, under medical certificate, that a comfortable passage, suited to their rank of life, shall be provided for them, and a Donation of Sicca Rupees five hundred (Sa. Rs. 500) be granted them, and the same to be allowed in case Government should from whatever cause dispense with their services at any time previous to the expiration of six months from the period of their engaging.

2 Home Pub. Cons., 12th Oct., 1826, Nos. 19 & 20.

3 Home Pub. Cons., 22nd July, 1833, No. 39.

4 Home Pub. Cons., 5th January, 1826, No. 2. *See footnote on next page.*

The war services of the *Enterprise* and her Captain fully justified the decision of the Governor-General in Council. To quote Mr. Prinsep,[1] " on the occasion, having brought the news of the first cessation of hostilities, many days before Captain Snodgrass arrived with the despatches in His Majesty's ship *Champion*, although the *Champion* had sailed before the *Enterprise* even reached

Estimate of Pay and Provision money required for the Commanders, Officers, and Crew of the Hon'ble Company Steam Vessel, the Enterprize for one Month :—

Commander at	... 1,000	Rupees per month	... 1,000
First Officer at	... 150	Do. ...	... 150
Second Officer at	.. 120	Do. ...	... 120
Third Officer at	... 100	Do. ...	... 100
2 Engineers	... 500	Do. ...	... 1,000
1 Carpenter	... 70	Do. ...	... 70
1 Carpenter's Mate	... 60	Do. ...	... 60
6 Sea Cunnies	... 30	Do. ...	... 180
6 Stokers	... 20	Do. ...	... 120
1 Sweeper	... 20	Do. ...	... 20
1 Syrang	... 25	Do. ...	... 25
2 Tyndals	... 20	Do. ...	... 40
1 Kyssaub	... 12	Do. ...	... 12
35 Lascars	... 12	Do. ...	... 420
1 Bandarry	... 12	Do. ...	... 12
2 Topasses	... 10	Do. ...	... 20
1 Steward	... 30	Do. ...	... 30
1 Cook	... 16	Do. ...	... 16
1 Servant	... 20	Do. ...	... 20
2 Boys at 7 Rupees each		... ...	... 14
Table allowance for Commanders at six Rupees per day			180
To the Commander for 3 officers at 3		...	... 270
To 2 Engineers at 2 Rupees per day		...	... 120
Provision money for six Sea Cunnies and six stokers on sweeper at 12 annas		... ...	... 292—6
To Do. 47 Natives at 2-4-0 per month each			... 292—12
One Carpenter and one Mate at 12 annas each			... 45
Total Pay and Provision for one month			... 4,442—2

[1] *Op. Cit.*, p. 11.

Rangoon, she saved the treasury above six lakhs, by preventing the transmission of stores, fresh contracts for transports and other expenses, which a delay of twenty-four hours would have incurred." Between 7th January, 1826 and 3rd February, 1828 the *Enterprise* made no less than twenty-six journeys between Calcutta and different ports of the Bay of Bengal, though she was under repair from September, 1826 to March, 1827.[1]

Before the purchase of the *Enterprise* the Government had decided to have two more steam boats locally built with engines imported from home. It is to be noted that the new engines came from Mr. Maudeslay's workshop and the boats were built at Kidderpore by Messrs. Kyd & Co. with timber supplied from Government stores. The new boats were named the *Irawaddy* and the *Ganges* and they could be fitted with heavy guns if necessary. The *Enterprise* naturally supplied the Commanders of the new steamers as officers with necessary experience could be found on her staff alone. The Government went on with their building programme and by 1828 two more boats, the *Burhampooter* and the *Hoogly*, were launched at Kidderpore and Howrah. Steamers were no longer novelties to be admired, but their running expense and upkeep were still too heavy for business firms. The Government, however, had found them useful and the Commissioner of the newly annexed province of Assam requisitioned the services of one of the new boats. Probably the

[1] Prinsep, *op. cit.*, Appendix C.

Burhampooter would have been sent to ply in the river that gave her name but Lord William Bentinck decided otherwise. He was of opinion that if steamers could successfully navigate the Ganges considerable economy in money and time could be effected in military transport. It was found that in 1825-26 boat hire alone for conveying troops came to five lakhs and seventy two thousand. His Lordship, therefore, asked Mr. H. T. Prinsep to go into the question and submit a report. Mr. H. T. Prinsep's report has been so ably summarised by Mr. G. A. Prinsep[1] that I need not repeat the findings here. Mr. Prinsep came to the conclusion that if a regular steamer service could be established between Calcutta and Allahabad considerable saving could be effected in military expenses. The scheme demanded a careful survey of the courses of the Ganges and the sounding of its depth at different points. Captain Johnston had been consulted by the Governor-General and had submitted a note on the subject. It was quite natural that he should be appointed to conduct the preliminary survey. With him was associated another naval officer of experience, Captain Thomas Prinsep. They left Calcutta on the 8th September, 1828 on the *Hoogly*, commanded by Mr. Warden of the pilot service. The journey up was completed in 24 days but the return journey took ten days less. It took an ordinary country boat three months to cover the same distance. The result of the experiment was, therefore, exceedingly satisfactory. The *Hoogly* made a second

[1] *Op. cit.*, Chapter IV.

journey[1] with less satisfactory result, but sufficient materials had already been collected and Lord William Bentinck decided to proceed with his scheme.

Meanwhile the Bombay Government had also been interesting themselves in steam navigation. In 1829 a steam boat, the *Hugh Lindsay*, was built in the Bombay Dockyard and the *Enterprise* was transferred to that Presidency. We need not take any notice of her subsequent career here. Suffice it to say that though his boat left Bengal the services of Captain Johnston were retained under the designation of Superintendent of the Company's Steam Vessels, because to quote a letter[2] to the Marine Board, "there existed no other officer so capable, from his experience and intelligence of promoting the successful establishment of a steam communication up the Ganges." No wonder that when the Government decided to depute one of their officers to Europe to collect such data as might further their plan of inland navigation the choice fell on Captain Johnston.

He arrived at London in April, 1831 and immediately reported himself to the Directors of the East India Company. It was his intention to consult scientists and to inspect the steam vessels navigating the Continental rivers before designing a perfect model for India. It was quite natural that Johnston should consult his old friend and partner Mr. Maudeslay before any body else. Maudeslay's engines had been used by the Government of India

1 Capt. Johnston was not on board this time.

2 Home Dept. Pub. Cons., 22nd Sept., 1833, No. 4.

more than once. Among others he saw Watt and Stephenson. After inspecting English steam boats he left for the Continent and travelled in France, Germany and Holland in steam-propelled vessels. It will not be possible to insert here Johnston's correspondence on the subject which cover 112 folio foolscap pages.[1] After concluding his investigations on the Rhine, the Rhone and the Seine he recommended "the adoption of Iron Boats, not exceeding the dimensions set forth in my circular, *viz.*, 120 ft. in length by 20 to 22 in breadth with low pressure condensing Engines and Iron Boilers, as at once the most efficient and most economical that can be employed in Indian Internal Navigation." Orders were placed with Maudeslay for a pair of iron boats after Johnston's model and on the 3rd July, 1833 the Captain reported his arrival "in the chartered ship *Larkins* with two iron steam vessels and their engines. There are also embarked on board for the Government steam service five Superintending Engineers, five Engine Drivers and two Boiler makers."[2] Thus iron boats with iron boilers were introduced in Indian rivers.

It may be noted here that Johnston's iron boats were not designed to carry passengers or cargo. They were really tug-boats of very light draught used for towing what in those days were styled as accommodation boats in which cabins and promenade decks were provided for passengers and there was

[1] Home Dept. Pub. Cons., 5 Feb., 1833, K.W. to No. 18.
[2] Home Dept. Pub. Cons., 5 July, 1833, Nos. 3 and 4.

ample room for their luggage and the horses of the military officers. Private persons were booked only when accommodation was available after meeting the demands of the Government servants.

The establishment of the boats was as follows :[1]

Steam Boat.	Salary. Rs.
Commander of 5 years service	300
Commander of less 5 years	250
Mate of five years ...	125
Mate above 2 and under five	100
Mate less 2	80
1 Syrang	20+3
1 Tindal	14+2
4 Seakonies	14+1 each.
10 Lascars	8+1 each.
6 Stokers	16+1 each.
1 Carpenter	20+2
1 Bundary	8+1
1 Cook	10+2
1 Topass	10+1
1 Servant	7+1

Accommodation Boat.	Salary. Rs.
Commander of 5 years ...	250
Commander less 5 years	200
Mate of 5 years ...	125
Above 2 and under 5 ...	100
Less than 2 ...	80
Clerk	30
1 Carpenter ...	20+2
1 Tindal	14+1
4 Seakonies ...	14+1 each.
12 Lascars ...	8+1 each.
2 Topasses ...	10+1
1 Cook	12
2 Bundary & Mate ...	8 each.

It is needless to say that the speed of the steamers behind which trailed the accommodation boats varied from season to season according to the strength of the current and the depth of the river.[2] The steamers in those days used to lie at anchor at night at a convenient place like the country boats and that partly explains their slow progress.

[1] Johnston's Memorandum, dated 9th September, 1839. Sec. Cons., 15th Jan., 1840, No. 38.

[2] H. O. & A. Robinson, *op. cit.*, Appendix A, p. 74.

This Statement exhibits the estimated time or average number of days occupied by a Steamer in passing from Station to Station between Allahabad and Calcutta.*

From Allahabad	To Mirzapore	Benares	Ghazepore	Patna or Dinapore	Mongheer	Bhaugulpore	Rajmahal	Berhampore	Bogwangolah	Rampore Baules	Comercallee	Koolna in the Soonderbunds	Calcutta	Total
Month	Days	Days	Days	Days	Days	Days	Days	Days	Days	Days	Days	Days	Days	Days
January ...	1	1	1	2	2	½	½	...	½	½	1	2½	3½	16
February ...	1	1	1	2	2	½	½	...	½	½	1	2½	3½	16
March ...	1	1	1	2	2	1	1	...	½	½	1	2½	3½	17
April ...	1	1	1	2	2	½	½	...	½	½	1	2½	3½	16
May ...	1	1	1	1	2	½	½	...	½	½	1	2½	3½	15
June ...	1	1	1	1½	1	½	½	1	...	...	...	...	1	8
July ...	½	½	1	1	1	½	½	1	...	...	...	...	1	7
August ...	½	½	1	1	1	½	½	1	...	...	...	...	1	7
September ...	½	½	1	1	1	½	½	1	...	...	...	...	1	7½
October ...	1	1	1	1½	1½	½	½	...	½	½	1	2½	3½	15
November ...	1	1	1	1½	1½	½	½	...	½	½	1	2½	3½	15
December ...	1	1	1	...	2	½	½	...	½	½	1	2½	3½	16

* The times are of course frequently greatly exceeded by casualties, etc.

This Statement exhibits the estimated time or average number of days employed by a Steamer in passing from Station to Station between Calcutta and Allahabad.*

From Calcutta	To Comercalee	Baulea	Berhampore	Rajmahal	Bhaugulpore	Mongheer	Patna or Dinapore	Ghazepore	Benares	Mirzapore	Allahabad	Total
Month	Days	Days	Days	Days	Days	Days	Days	Days	Days	Days	Days	Days
January	6	6	...	10	11	13	16	19	20	22	24	24
February	6	6	...	10	11	13	16	19	20	21	23½	23½
March	6	6	...	10	11	13	16	19	20	21	23½	23½
April	6	6	...	10	11	13	15	18	20	22	24	24
May	5	6	...	9	10	11	14	17	18	19	21	21
June	...	...	4	6	6	9	11	14	15	16	18	18
July	...	...	4	7	8	9	11	15	17	18	21	21
August	...	...	4	8	9	10	13	16	17	19	21	21
September	...	...	5	8	9	11	14	18	20	21	23	23
October	6	7	...	9	10	12	15	18	20	22	24	24
November	7	9	...	11	12	14	17	20	21	23	25	25
December	6	8	...	10	12	13	16	19	21	23	25	25

* The times are of course frequently greatly exceeded by casualties, etc.

FORT WILLIAM, MARINE BOARD OFFICE,
The 4th February, 1841.

(Sd.) J. H. JOHNSTON,
Controller of Government Steam Vessels.

On his return to Calcutta in 1833 Captain Johnston was appointed Controller of the Honourable Company's Steam Vessels with a room in the Marine Board Office. It was also decided that " he should be the channel for communicating all orders to the Commanders of Steamers and for conducting the correspondence of the Board connected with that branch of the service." He was also to maintain " a proper discipline among the Officers, Engineers and Crews of the steamers " and to prepare " detailed rules for the guidance of all the subordinates in that Department."[1] But the rise in rank did not mean a rise in pay though it must have added to the power and prestige of Captain Johnston. He began his career in 1825 with a salary of Rs. 1,000 and a table allowance of Rs. 180. When he retired in 1851 his emoluments amounted to Rs. 1,245 in all, of which Rs. 200 formed his personal allowance and Rs. 45, " Batta."[2]

In 1834 two more Iron Boats arrived.[3] By 1835 Lord William Bentinck's three successful journeys by iron boats to Allahabad, despite adverse circumstances, had amply demonstrated " the practicability of interior navigation " but from a purely business point of view the Government Steam Vessels could not be regarded as a going concern. Captain Johnston, therefore, suggested a few improvements. Hitherto one pilot was employed on a monthly salary of Rs. 12 (and a boat) for every fifty miles. This was found unsatisfactory. No

[1] Home Dept. Pub. Cons., 2nd Sept., 1833, No. 4.
[2] Mily. Dept. Marine Cons., 30th May, 1851, Nos. 7 and 8.
[3] Home Dept. Pub. Cons., 1st Dec., 1834, No. 1.

single man could be expected to have a thorough knowledge of so long a course and the salary was not attractive enough for really competent persons. Some thing had also to be done for keeping the river course free from trees and other obstacles. Captain Johnston submitted a scheme that would "admit of pilòts being stationed at every 25 miles on salaries for four men and a boat of 16 Rs. per month." He further suggested that the Government should maintain a small but "efficient establishment of engineers of their own" so that such repairs as the iron boats might need could be undertaken by them instead of sending to "the expensive and tardy factory of Jessop and Company." This new establishment would necessarily demand much of his time and energy, and Johnston suggested that a small staff on Rs. 522 only a month should be appointed to relieve him of his ordinary routine duties. This was readily conceded and the workshop was in due course opened.[1]

[1] Home Dept. Pub. Progs., 20th Feb., 1835, Nos. 17 and 18.

Proposed Office Establishment—

One Head Clerk	300
One assistant Book Keeper and Store Keeper ...	120
One copyist	50
One copyist	30
One Duftery	7
Three Peons at 5/- each	15
	522
One Durwan { For the Workshop ... ... / For the Boil Office	7
One Durwan	7
Common to the two offices—One Master	5
One Bhisty	5
One Peon	5
	29

In a memorandum dated the 26th November, 1838, Johnston explains his plan for training Engineers and engine drivers for the inland steam navigation service.[1] He had then nine Steam Vessels under his control, " all efficient for service." " A few months after my return to Calcutta," he writes, " in July 1833 from my mission to the Court of Directors, several lads of various parentage, but all borne in India had been placed as apprentice under the Superintending Engineers and Boiler Makers who had accompanied me from England." In 1834 some Engineers and Mechanics were dismissed in the interest of discipline but the apprentices were not sufficiently trained as yet to take up their jobs. In due course they proved their ability as Johnston testifies. " The native born of whatever parentage who now constitute the class of engine drivers are capable of much continued bodily exertion and exposure to heat and sun without any of the inconveniences to which the European is liable and under direction and superintendence, are fully competent to the duties of the engine room and even many of our firemen can stop and start, reverse the motion, pack, make joints, etc., etc." Thus apprentices were being trained under Johnston to replace the highly paid engineers recruited from England. The Controller of H. C. Steam Vessels himself selected the apprentices after a personal interview and preferred destitute orphans to boys in affluent circum-

[1] Mily. Dept. Marine Cons., 26th Dec., 1838, No. 6 & K.W.
In one of the appendices Capt. Johnston gives a schedule of contract prices for nuts, bolts, plates and other articles that may prove useful to students of economic history.

stances. It may be incidentally noted that the list appended to his memorandum shows that all these " native born of whatever parentage " but three (two Mahomedan Engine Drivers and a Chinese Carpenter) were East Indians or, to use a modern and a more popular term, Anglo-Indians.

Of the Indian workmen employed in the workshop the great majority were Hindus, and Johnston's observations on the difficulties due to caste system are worth quoting. " It is very much to be regretted that amongst the working mechanics religion and caste are strictly observed. The smiths, vicemen, braziers and castors are almost without exception Hindoos, a circumstance which prevented there (*sic.*) embarking on board the Steam Vessels, where a few such hands would render the engine room establishment very efficient at small cost and I regret to say that my endeavour to bring forward Mussulmans as artificers have not hitherto been attended with the degree of success I had hoped for." He highly praises the workmanship of these mechanics but they were irregular in their attendance. " Many have their families in distant parts of the country whom they visit every year about the festival of Doorgah Poojah and are absent from work for this purpose for a month, six weeks or two months." From a statement appended to the memorandum it appears that the income of these mechanics varied from 2 as. to 10 as. per diem and despite all caste prejudices and pride two high caste Brahmans, Ram Mookerjee and Taccordoss Chatterjee, were working as vicemen on the paltry wage of 4 and 5 as. respectively.

Here we may take leave of Johnston and his reports. He continued in service till March, 1851, when ill health compelled him to retire. He was away home in 1847 and 1848 also, probably for reasons of health, for he was then an old man of sixty. He left Calcutta by the "*Queen*"[1] to die near the Cape of Good Hope.

Captain Johnston's office was abolished immediately after his retirement. It saved the Government about 9,000 Rupees per annum after making provision for slight increments in the pay of several officers of the Marine Board. Johnston's hopes had been fully justified and private enterprise was once more in evidence. The Ganges Steam Navigation Company appeared in the field in 1844 with improved type of steamers more like those we see in our rivers to-day and soon outdid the tug and accommodation boats in speed and economy. Johnston had done his work so well that the future of steam navigation in India was well assured when he left and the Government no longer stood in need of a highly paid specialist to look after their steam boats.



[1] Mily. Dept. Marine Cons., 30th May, 1851, Nos. 1-2.

LORD AUCKLAND ON DELHI

Lord Auckland has left an unhappy record in India. He ruined his reputation for good when he sent a futile expedition to Afghanistan that ended in disgrace and disaster. Success alone might have justified unprovoked aggression but no apology can be offered for a fruitless war. Yet in fairness to him we should not forget that Lord Auckland was not the real author of his foreign policy. The portfolio of foreign affairs at home was held by that masterful person, Lord Palmerston, and the Whig ministers of Queen Victoria expected the Governor-General to be an unquestioning instrument of their anti-Russian measures. Though a misfit in times of war, there is reason to believe that Lord Auckland, if left to himself, might have proved an excellent administrator in times of peace. His minute on Delhi, dated Karnul, the 7th March, 1838, bears ample testimony to Lord Auckland's solicitude for the walfare of the people he was called upon to govern. This alone would offer some justification for reproducing *in extenso* this interesting document which incidentally goes a long way to prove that Lord Auckland was prepared to do everything possible for the economic, civic and intellectual improvement of the imperial city.

It is no wonder that the Governor-General should give the problem of defence a place of

precedence. In 1838 the Sutlej marked the north-western boundary of British India and Delhi formed an advanced military post of great strategical value. Nor could its political importance be safely ignored, for a titular emperor, a descendant of Akbar and Aurangzib, still held his court in Shah Jahan's palace, and though shorn of power and prestige he still commanded the reverence, if not the allegiance, of many citizens of light and leading. In 1804 the Maratha hordes of Jaswant Rao Holkar were repulsed from the outskirts of Delhi by the prowess of Sir David Ochterlony and we are told that "many lakhs have since been laid out in its defences. These defences consist of a high wall enclosing a circumference of nearly seven miles, with Martello Towers at long intervals and bastions at the seven gates." Lord Auckland had no illusion about the utility of these extensive ramparts against a well-equipped force in a major war. But he thought it would be false economy to leave it unfinished when only one-seventh of the work, originally contemplated, remained to be done. He appreciated the value of the city walls for the maintenance of peace and order in normal times but he held that the money would have been better invested in "a citadel of much smaller proportions strongly fortified capable of being occupied by an inconsiderable garrison." The Mutiny proved twenty years later how sound his judgment was.

The problems of defence naturally turned Lord Auckland's attention to the Jumna. The Jumna had receded from its former bed immediately below the ramparts of Shah Jahan's fort and the Governor-

General suggested that steps should be taken to divert the river to its original course by means of fresh embankments so that it might add to the "strength, beauty and the cleanliness of the town."

It was left for Lord Curzon to enunciate a comprehensive policy and to organise a new department for the restoration and preservation of the ancient monuments of India. But it is no small credit to Lord Auckland that he evinced similar interest in the magnificent ruins in which Delhi and its environs abound. He particularly urged Captain George Thomson, Executive Engineer of Delhi, to take special care for the preservation of the Qutb Minar and the remains of the stately mosques and tombs in its immediate neighbourhood.

Lord Auckland was a professed Whig and shared the liberal principles of his party. Although anxious to add as much as possible to the amenities of civic life he held that such improvements, though inspired by officials, should in general be carried out by private contributions. "Far less," he observes, "has certainly been accomplished in this manner at Delhi than might have been effected, and it is melancholy to find in this climate aqueducts crumbling into decay, sewers and drains choked up, and roads in many places with difficulty passable when by a very limited outlay all might have been maintained." He suggested that the Executive Engineer should be called upon to submit a report on the ancient aqueducts and drains of the city and an estimate of the expense for their repair and restoration. The Governor-General also recommended that the waste lands belonging to the Government or

to the titular king might profitably be let out on lease for residential purposes. "The demand for land," he writes, "within the walls is every day increasing, and as these lands or ancient gardens may be appropriated to building, it should be done upon some consistent plan so that consideration may be given to objects of health and convenience and police and even to beauty and symmetry of architecture." Lovers of old Mughal gardens may sincerely deplore the appropriation of those beauty spots for residential purposes, and Lord Curzon's government would doubtless have taken suitable measures for their preservation and upkeep had they survived to our times, but otherwise it will be difficult to take exception to the general principle laid down by Lord Auckland that the new buildings of the city should not be out of harmony with their environments and while provision should be made for the proper policing of the new suburbs, the aesthetic sense of the residents should not be unnecessarily offended. In fact no modern city architect could wish anything better.

The Governor-General next deals with the waste lands outside the city walls and suggests that much of the waste lands to the south of the city could be reclaimed and brought under cultivation without any risk to the interesting remains of antiquity. He was of opinion that the waste lands could profitably be leased out to intending cultivators without any rent for a term of twenty years or more. In this connection he emphasised the need of co-operation between the Magistrate and the inhabitants of Delhi for the general improvement of

the city. "I have already remarked," he goes on to say, "that the success of projected improvements in the avenues of towns or in other local arrangements must very mainly depend upon the co-operation of the leading inhabitants and upon the personal exertions of the Magistracy, and I know also that there is too prevalent a feeling that the indifference of the natives upon these subjects is not to be overcome, and that it is idle to contend with it. I am far from acquiescing in this opinion, on the contrary I believe it not to be difficult to direct the love of popular regard and the liberality which might waste itself in merely personal or temporary objects to works of public utility—a bridge, a school, a road, an aqueduct, or a tank; but to do this there must be conciliation and intercourse and mutual good will and confidence." It is superfluous to add that Lord Auckland's expectations have been more than justified in recent times, and he was perfectly right when he laid down that the proof of a Magistrate's worth or lack of it is to be found in the measure of co-operation that he can command from people of wealth and influence in works of public utility.

The police of Delhi met with Lord Auckland's approval but he was horrified with the primitive condition prevailing in the prison. But for the segregation of women prisoners "there is no pretence of classification of any kind but the prisoner convicted of heinous or of light crimes, the prisoner under examination, even the sick and the convalescent are all herded together except that the prisoners for life are in the most revolting manner chained to their cells either by the neck or by the leg, and not

able to move beyond the range of their chains." The jail hospital was in able hands but, unlike those in other populous cities, did not administer to popular needs. The only well administered public institution was the Lunatic Asylum but it compared unfavourably with that of Benares. " Except to the insane, no public succour of any kind is given to the sick of this great city " and Lord Auckland suggested that a small dispensary should be established at an early date.

During his short stay at Delhi the Governor-General visited two colleges that catered to the intellectual needs of the city in those days. The Oriental College was fairly well endowed by private munificence; the English institution, however, depended entirely on Government subvention, and it appears that at one time every student expected some sort of stipend or allowance. The Governor-General speaks well of the English school although it was overstaffed and stood in need of a higher grade of tuition. In 1835 the system of general alimentary allowance was abolished and there was a marked fall in the roll strength of both the institutions.

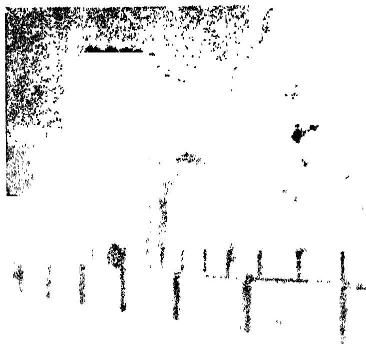
The important question of canal irrigation also engaged the Governor-General's attention and the problem of draining the Najafgarh *Jhil* and using the water of the Ghaggar river for irrigation purposes was carefully considered. It may be noted that shortly after Lord Auckland penned his minute an outlet was provided for the waters of the extensive Najafgarh *Jhil,* which covers many scores of square miles, by means of a canal.

Lord Auckland concluded his minute with a brief note on the royal household. The family had its residence in the fort and consisted of four hundred princes and more numerous women. Most of these princes were ignorant and uneducated and spent their time in profligate idleness. Obviously something had to be done, for the future of the royal family looked gloomy in all conscience. Lord Auckland desired that some provision should be made for the education of the junior members of the royal family. Twenty years later the Mutiny sealed the fate of the titular emperor and his kinsmen and there was no longer any room for the descendants of Babur in Shah Jahan's fortified palace.

Lord Auckland's survey embraced all the public institutions of Delhi and if he is judged by his intentions irrespective of his achievements, he may rightly claim to be ranked with Lord Curzon and Lord Hardinge as one of the most sincere benefactors of the ancient metropolis of Hindusthan.

MINUTE

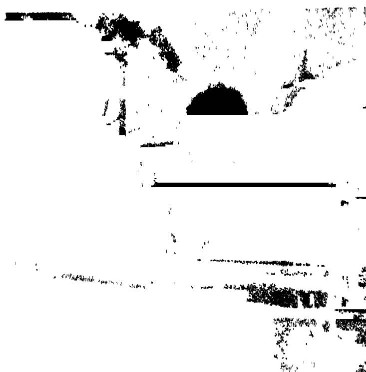
1. Having passed some days at Delhi I am desirous of recording the points to which I think that the attention of the Government and of the Officers under the Government should be especially directed, and the more so as there are few places in India to which from size, position, and association more importance is to be attached, and because I have seen much which seemed to me to offer a larger field for improvement.



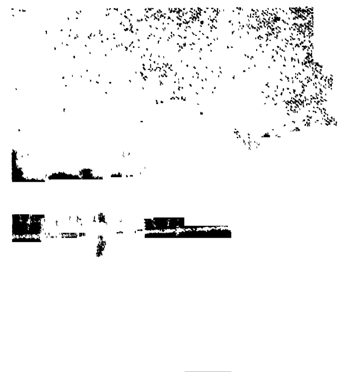
Delhi Gate



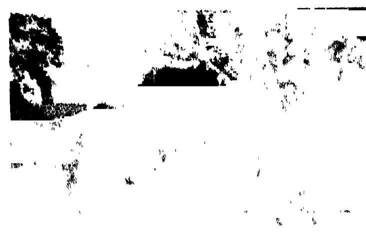
Ajmer Gate



Site of the Lahore Gate



Kashmer Gate



Kabul Gate



Turkman Gate

2. The Military importance of Delhi in the event of a new struggle being at any time forced upon the British Government for the possession of India, is sufficiently obvious. It contains the Magazines and the Munitions of war which are first in advance on our most open frontier. Its population from a sense of the decay of their great capital, and partly also from connection with the family of the ancient Dynasty, is supposed not to be well affected, and the presence of that family which the whole of the Mahomedan population yet regards with reverence, gives a political value to its occupation which would not otherwise belong to it. The gallant and the successful defence of the City against Holkar by Sir David Ochterlony in 1804, gave it something of military character and many lakhs have since been laid out in the improvement of its defences. These defences consist of a high wall enclosing a circumference of nearly seven miles, with Martello Towers at long intervals and bastions, at the seven gates. In front of the wall is a mud ditch, the approaches are tolerably clear, and a glacis has been nearly formed covering in height from two-thirds to three-fourths of the wall; against a superior and well-equipped and well-directed force these defences would be most inefficient, and they are so extensive that a large force would be required sufficiently to man them. Yet they would be strong against any popular movement or even against any native army, and they are completed with the exception of one bastion—of a few hundred yards of the glacis—of the removal of some mounds of earth on the river facing —and of the repair of another of the bastions the

foundations of which have been undermined by the river—and guns for all the defences have been provided though with some inconsistency of arrangement all provision of gun carriages has been omitted. As therefore six-sevenths of the work originally contemplated have been accomplished it would seem to be but bad economy to neglect this last fraction and Captain Thomson[1] might I think be authorised to proceed with the glacis and with the other works alluded to as he may have means at his disposal applicable to these objects. I should indeed as I have said in the event of any formidable Military struggle look for but little useful protection from these works, and I heartily regret that the money which has been expended upon them has not been applied to a citadel of much smaller porportions strongly fortified capable of being occupied by an inconsiderable garrison and covering whatever of public property it might be desirable to accumulate within such a work. For purposes however of police and if not against foreign war yet against any local or partial outrages and ebullitions of discontent, I consider the wall of Delhi to be very valuable, and I would not be

[1] Captain George Thomson (afterwards Lt.-Colonel) was appointed commander of the Bengal Sappers and Miners at Delhi and executive engineer of the Delhi Division of the Public Works Department in March, 1837. Born in 1799, he joined the Bengal service as an engineer cadet in 1818. He served with distinction in the Burmese War and gave evidence of exceptional engineering skill in constructing the Rohri-Bakkar bridge in 1839 when he was the Chief Engineer of the British expeditionary force in Afghanistan. He particularly distinguished himself in the capture of Ghazni. He retired from Indian service in 1841 and died in Dublin forty-five years later. *Dictionary of National Biography*, Vol. XIX, pp. 722-24.

understood as too much inclined to depreciate it. I am told that different schemes have been agitated for extending and improving these fortifications and although under such disadvantages as must attach to fortification around a city of so great a circuit, I am little inclined to favour any notion of this kind, yet having had my attention drawn to the subject, I should be glad to learn from Captain Thomson in a succinct report what plans of the nature are upon record, what are his own views in regard to them and what time would be spent and (approximately) what expense would be incurred in giving effect to any of them and in completing the equipment and mounting of the guns. For the prosecution of the works already sanctioned, or now to be carried on under the recommendation which I have before recorded, I would give to him all reasonable facilities in the labor of convicts, in the use of Commissariat bullocks, and other such available means.

3. I should also be glad, I may here say, to obtain from Captain Thomson any plans which may be in his office for raising an embankment the effect of which shall be that of bringing the Jumna back into its ancient course immediately under the City face. The plan may be difficult of execution and may otherwise have objections, of which I am not aware, but materials are cheap, the proximity of the river would add as well to the strength as to the beauty and the cleanliness of the town, and the project is at least worth the trouble of enquiry.

4. My attention had previously to my visit to Delhi been directed by the Commander in Chief as well in private as in public communications, to the

Corps of Sappers and Miners—and after local observation and enquiry, I entirely agree with His Excellency in opinion that this valuable Corps ought not to be, as at present, stationed in the City of Delhi exposed to many temptations injurious to good discipline and with no facilities for good Military exercise—I am quite prepared therefore to acquiesce in the proposition which has been made for moving the lines of the Corps to the right of the present Military Cantonment, and for selling or applying to other useful purposes the ground which is occupied by the present lines, and this measure will, I should expect, be attended rather with profit than with loss to the Government.

5. I cannot also but agree with the Commander-in-Chief in thinking that sufficient attention has not been paid to this Crops, and that its efficiency has been in some degree impaired by the absence of nearly all its officers upon duties connected with the public works. No one can estimate more highly than I do the value of the services in this respect of our Engineer officers, or would more reluctantly withdraw them generally from a line of employment in which they are so exceedingly useful and so highly distinguished, yet I am ready to admit that sufficient care has not been taken either by myself or by those who preceded me to keep this regiment under the control and direction of European officers, and I shall be glad gradually to apply myself to the amendment which I think desirable in this part of its discipline, so that at least four or five of the junior officers should generally be present and contributing as well to their own experience of regimental duty

as to the improvement of the men whom they may one day be called upon to lead in the most important operations. The Corps is itself in some degree disheartened and labouring under disadvantage from the presence of supernumeraries to the amount of nearly 140, in consequence of which the course of promotion is unduly checked, and it is open to consideration whether the removal of this disadvantage may not be hastened by the discharge, or by the drafting into other Corps, of many of these supernumeraries. I have to recommend that early attention be given to this subject which is material to the efficiency of a valuable part of our Military Force.

6. It is but lately that this Corps has been placed under any consistency of direction by combining its command with the office of Executive Engineer of Delhi, and I anticipate great advantage from the efficiency of Captain G. Thomson who has been recently appointed to these united offices.[1] I think too that pains may with advantage be applied in a greater degree than has hitherto been the case to the instruction of the Sappers and Miners in accomplishments which may fit them for employment in the subordinate offices of the Public Works —I believe such instruction to be given to European Corps of this description, and I should be glad to see it extended to our Native Sappers.

1 Thomson himself thought otherwise and held that the duties of the two offices could not be conveniently combined. That was why he resigned in 1841.—*Dictionary of National Biography*, Vol. XIX, pp. 722-24.

7. Captain Thomson has been directed to complete the bridge over the Hindan[1] which was commenced by Captain De Bude,[2] and I have heard enough upon this bridge to make me anxious for a report upon it. I fear that from the ground upon which it was intended to rest not having been sufficiently examined, much of the work which has been will have to be removed and recommenced.

8. The Kootub Minar and the very interesting remains of antiquity in the neighbourhood of that extraordinary column, are also under the care of Captain Thomson—and I cannot too strongly express my wish for its careful preservation and for an ostensible regard on the part of the Government for this as for any other similar monument of their past history to which the interest and respect of the native community must naturally be attached. I was pleased with the excellent condition in which I found this pillar, and I would request Captain Thomson from time to time to inspect it and guard it from injury. Without also except after reference to the Government incurring any great expense I would authorize him to provide by the removal of rank vegetation and by diverting all accumulation of water that the effect of time upon what yet remains of the very curious buildings adjacent to the Minar should be as little destructive as possible, and I would particularly draw his attention to the Arches

[1] The Hindan, also called Chhaja in its upper course, rises in the Siwaliks in Saharanpur District and falls into the Jumna.—*Imperial Gazetteer of India.*

[2] Henry De Bude (1800-43) joined the Engineers as a cadet in 1815. He was appointed Garrison and Executive Engineer at Delhi in April, 1831, See Hodson's *Officers of the Bengal Army.*

of two of the Gateways the key stones of which appear to be sinking and which might possibly by early attention be saved. I should be well disposed at once to sanction any not immoderate expense for this latter object.

9. It has also seemed to me that much good may be effected within the City of Delhi by the Executive Officers if assisted by an able and zealous Magistrate—I am not desirous that much should be done directly under the orders and at the expense of the Government for I am in this, as in other instances, inclined to wish that the charge and control of municipal improvement should be borne largely by the inhabitants of each City. Far less has certainly been accomplished in this manner at Delhi than might have been effected, and it is melancholy to find in this climate aqueducts crumbling into decay, sewers and drains choked up, and roads in many places with difficulty passable when by a very limited outlay all might have been maintained. I think that Captain Thomson should be called upon for a report upon the ancient aqueducts and drains of the City, and for a general estimate of the expense at which each may be repaired and made effective. I could wish too to obtain from him a report upon the waste ground within the city which is the property of the Government or over the disposition of which as property of the King the Government may exercise some influence. The demand for land within the walls is every day increasing, and as these lands or ancient gardens may be appropriated to building, it should be done upon some consistent plan so that consideration may be given to objects of

health and convenience and police and even to beauty and symmetry of architecture.

10. Outside of the walls I have been led to believe that without injuring any of the most interesting remains of antiquity, much of the immense plain of ruin and desolation which extends to the south of the town would be gradually reclaimed and brought into cultivation if it were tendered to occupiers free of rent for a term of twenty or more years, and I am desirous that the Commissioner should be authorised after further consultation on the precise terms to be fixed with the Board of Revenue, to try this experiment. I have already remarked that the success of projected improvements in the avenues of towns or in other local arrangements must very mainly depend upon the co-operation of the leading inhabitants and upon the personal exertion of the Magistracy, and I know also that there is too prevalent a feeling that the indifference of the natives upon these subjects is not to be overcome, and that it is idle to contend with it. I am far from acquiescing in this opinion, on the contrary I believe it not to be difficult to direct the love of popular regard and the liberality which might waste itself in merely personal or temporary objects to works of public utility—a bridge, a school, a road, an aqueduct, or a tank; but to do this there must be conciliation and intercourse and mutual good will and confidence, and as a Magistrate is able and willing or otherwise, to establish these, and to lead those under his charge who have most of wealth and influence to act in co-operation with him, so is he peculiarly fit for his office or to be pronounced

wanting in some of the qualifications on which the Government sets the highest value. I have seen traces and beneficial proofs of this union in other places—I cannot say that I have found it at Delhi. With regard to what may be accomplished directly by the Government, I have to beg that information may be called for as to whether any surplus of the Chowkedarry tax, or any ferry or other local fund may be made applicable to the purposes which I have in view. Possibly the King of Delhi might be influenced to employ some portions of the Royal Grant for such objects when directly connected with the improvement of the Buildings and grounds of the Palace or its Environs.

11. I would not in any remarks be understood as unduly censuring Mr. French,[1] the present Magistrate. He has been but a few months in the office, he found here many of the defects upon which I have had to comment, and I am afraid that at Delhi as at other places, such defects are greatly to be attributed to that frequent change of officers which leaves no one responsible, and which makes a persevering and consistent course of improvement so peculiarly difficult in India. Yet it is impossible for me not to say that I should have been much better pleased by finding not only a due attention to the ordinary and necessary duties of office, but also a zealous and warm interest for the comfort of the

[1] It appears from the enclosure to a letter, dated the 26th May, 1838, from Mr. T. T. Metcalfe, Agent to the Governor-General at Delhi, to Mr. W. H. Macnaghten, Secretary to Governor-General, Political Department, that Mr. P. C. French was officiating as Collector of Delhi in 1838. (Pol. Cons., 4th July, 1838, No. 6.)

community by the promotion of measures of general convenience and advantages.

12. It is to the credit of the Magistracy that the police is very well-spoken of and said to be within the City most efficient for the maintenance of order and the repression of crime, objects for which much assistance must be derived from efficient outer wall as also by the means which are at command of closing at night the communication between one section of the City with another. Without the walls, I had not reason to commend either the efficiency of the police or the goodness of the roads, on the contrary thefts and acts of violence were frequent beyond what is commonly the case in my camp and its neighbourhood, and the roads were unusually rugged. I was too far from being satisfied with the Jail. In discipline it is at least as faulty as any which I have seen, in construction it is more so, and although I am unwilling to attempt many changes before the subject of Prisons shall be brought, as is intended, with a view to a general reform before the Government, I think that this jail is particularly open to observation. The building is an ancient Serae,[1] consisting of one large square, the Chambers of which abutting upon the outer wall, are the cells of the Prisoners. One small yard is walled off for the women, and a building for the sick stands in the middle and except that the women are separated, there is no pretence of classification of any kind—but the prisoner convicted of heinous or

[1] The Sarai is named after Farid Khan, one of the grandees of Jahangir's court.

of light crimes, the prisoner under examination, even the sick and the convalescent are all herded together except that the prisoners for life are in the most revolting manner chained to their cells either by the neck or by the legs, and not able to move beyond the range of their chains. The Hospital seems to be carefully attended by Mr. McIntosh,[1] but it opens on the great Court, and it is utterly inapplicable to those general objects of charity to which I have been glad to find that the hospitals of our jails are in most populous cities open. I would require the Commissioner to report on the means of improving this jail in the points in which I have marked it as being deficient (if the means cannot be furnished without great expense of wholly removing it to another site) and I would specially ask for plans and estimates for dividing the enclosure into a proper number of wards.

13. Within the city an Insane Hospital is supported by the Government and I am glad to bear witness to the cleanliness, the quiet, and excellent order of its management, but the locality is bad and confined, and the establishment is very inferior to that of the same description which is supported at Benares, the free ventilation of which and the means of occupation which its gardens afford to those who are but slightly affected, make it to stand favourably in contrast with the narrow space allotted to the purpose at Delhi. I would ask the Commissioner to report whether upon the removal of the lines of the

[1] Robert McIntosh was Asst. Garrison Surgeon and Civil Surgeon, Delhi, in 1838 and was promoted to the rank of Surgeon next year.

Sappers and Miners from within the City some better accommodation might not well be procured for the purpose of this Hospital.

14. Except to the insane, no public succour of any kind is given to the sick of this great City, and as a Medical establishment is already supported for this one object, and the extension of the services of such an establishment to the general purposes of a dispensary might probably be accomplished at a very small expense, I would desire the attention of the Commissioner to this subject, also in communication with the Executive Engineer and with Mr. McIntosh and in connection with the enquiry respecting a change in the site of the Hospital, I am strongly favourable to the plan of establishing in the Western Provinces two or three dispensaries on the scheme recently settled in my correspondence with the President in Council such as it has been resolved to found at four of the Principal stations in Bengal and Behar—and no City would appear to be more appropriate for an establishment of this kind than Delhi.

15. Upon the ordinary course of the revenue and Judicial business, I do not think it necessary here to speak at length—Whatever I may have to remark upon these will be found in my communications with those to whom these departments are immediately subordinate, but whilst I think that enough has not been done at Delhi in that most important though undefined course of administration by which the general welfare of a people is consulted and promoted, their affections and feelings are conciliated, and their co-operation secured to a

Government, I would in justice say that I have had no reason to find fault with any want of diligence or regularity in the manner in which the business strictly imposed upon its officers has been performed.

16. There are at Delhi two Colleges, one an Oriental one supported in part by a munificent Private donation which yields a monthly income of about Rs. 556 and the other an English Institution wholly endowed by the Government. I visited both of these schools and during my residence at Delhi particular enquiries were made into their conduct and management by my direction and in pursuance of a wish expressed by the General Committee of Public Instruction. The result of these enquiries will be laid before the Government in due course, and in the mean time, I need only observe, that the scale of instruction at the Oriental College appears to have been found very deficient. For many years this college seems not to have trained up any distinguished scholars, its system to have been in many respects faulty, and its teachers but imperfectly qualified; and I am quite disposed to favour any reform which may within the ample means allotted to the college, secure to all desirous to prosecute Oriental studies, the best possible means of instruction. The English Institution has already supplied several promising young men to the Public Service. It seemed however to have an establishment of teachers disproportionately large as compared with the number of scholars and yet to want a higher grade of tuition for the youths of the senior classes who have already acquired a considerable mastery over the English language. Arrangements

for providing for this want are under the consideration of the Committee of Education and the particular measures which it may be most desirable and practicable to adopt have formed part of the recent investigations to which I have alluded.

17. The Nuwab Hamid Ullee Khan as representative of the individual by whom the Delhi Oriental College has been so liberally endowed has urged frequent and strong complaints of neglect and abuse in the management and superintendence of the Institution—A further Memorial of the same nature was presented to me when at Delhi, and the subject shall have the most accurate enquiry. I find the annexed[1] Notice of these complaints in the published report of the Education Committee for 1836 (page 105). The question of giving pecuniary rewards of merit in one sum as prizes at the annual examinations or of granting in preference to the most distinguished candidates fixed stipends restricted in number but to be held for a limited time after a fair and very strict competition in the place of the former objectionable system of indiscriminate alimentary allowances is one worthy of grave attention in maturing our plans for the improvement of education in this country.

[1] "Towards the close of the year 1835 Nawab Hamid Allee Khan requested that the interest of his late father-in-law Fuzul Ali Khan's grant might be expended on this college under his superintendence on which we remarked that *more than the monthly income derived from the grant (about Rs. 556) was laid out in the encouragement of Arabic and Persian learning in the college*, that in our opinion pecuniary rewards of merit ought to be substituted for the small alimentary allowances hitherto indiscriminately granted to the Oriental students, &c."

18. It may be of interest to incorporate with this Minute the subjoined statement of the effect of the order of March, 1835, abolishing the system of general Alimentary allowances at both the Oriental and English Colleges at Delhi.

A Memorandum of the Students of the Oriental and English Colleges for the past 5 years

Oriental College, Delhi				Delhi English Institution			
On 1st January	Stipendiaries	Non-Stipendiaries	Total	On 1st January	Stipendiaries	Non-Stipendiaries	Total
1833	243	36	279	1833	134	18	152
1834	230	18	248	1834	129	11	140
1835	217	10	227	1835	127	61	188
1836	164	34	198	1836	117	50	167
1837	124	17	141	1837	68	40	108
1836, February 26th.	89	34	123	1838	47	41	88

19. The very interesting and important subjects of the improvement of the canal irrigation in the Delhi Districts, the drainage of the Nujufghur Jheel,[1] and the employment if it be found practi-

[1] " The area which drains into the Najafgarh *Jhil* is estimated at some 3,000 square miles; in years gone by an area of more than 80 square miles has been known to be submerged by the floods." In 1838 a channel known as the *Jhil* drain was cut to run the surplus water into the Jumna under the supervision of Captain (afterwards Sir Henry) David. The drain begins at Chaola and falls into the Jumna at

cable of the waters of the Guggur River[1] for irrigation purposes, engaged much of my attention in my enquiries respecting the internal condition of this Territory. In a season like the present of disastrous drought, it has been peculiarly gratifying to observe the benefits conferred by the canals on the tract of country through which they run and the maintenance (and the extension as far as the supply of water from the Jumna will admit) of such works, is an object worthy of all the care of the Government. The result of my observations on these works and topics connected with them, will be found in a resolution recorded by me on the proceedings of the Government of the N. W. Provinces, and as a copy of that resolution will of course be brought before the Supreme Government, I need not recapitulate the contents of it in this paper.

20. Before closing this paper, I would only add a few words upon the Royal family at Delhi. This family occupies a large section of the City. The King's Palace is surrounded by a high wall, enclosing a space not less than two miles in circum-

Wazirabad.—*Delhi District Gazetteer* (1912), p. 7; *Gazetteer of the Delhi District* (1883-84), pp. 8-9.

For the draining canal see a map of the Najafgarh area appended to Fanshawe's *Delhi, Old and New.*

Mr. J. Thomason, Secretary to the N. W. P. Government, forwarded to the Military Board on the 15th March, 1838, a report from Lt. Durand, Engineer, dated the 26th February, 1838, relating to the drainage of the Najafgarh and other *Jhils* in the Southern Division of Delhi.—(Mily. Board's Progs., April, 1838, pp. 12, 123-40).

[1] The Ghaggar rises in the lower slopes of the Himalayas in the Sirmur State and runs through Ambala, Patiala and Hissar into Bikaner territory. The Ghaggar canals were constructed in 1896-97 and irrigate nearly 90 square miles of land in British and Bikaner territories.—*Imperial Gazetteer of India*, Vol. XII, pp. 212-13.

ference, within which he resides with Princes four hundred in number and with women far more numerous—Education is only bestowed upon a few of the higher branches of the family; the others are represented to be lamentably ignorant, living in unrestrained profligacy and many of them in a state bordering upon absolute penury, yet daily multiplying in number. It is impossible to foresee what end this accumulation of misery and degradation is to reach, nor can I point out the manner in which the Government can well and usefully deal with it, but I wish the Commissioner to be called upon to report on the condition and conduct of this family in all its several branches, and upon the present regulation of the Palace. I am desirous also that some early definite settlement should be formed of the question of the acceptance or refusal by the King of the terms on which a sum of three lakhs of additional stipend has been offered to him and of the proper distribution and appropriation of the amount. I hope that in the final application of the increase it may be found possible, in some degree, to improve the condition of this family, or at least to make some satisfactory general arrangement for the education of its junior members.

SOME PROBLEMS OF INDIAN HISTORY[1]

When Dr. Bisheshwar Prasad invited me to preside over the Early Medieval Section, I felt genuinely surprised. My knowledge of the Early Middle Ages is less than superficial and my contribution to the history of that period is practically nil. I could not therefore account for this unexpected and undeserved honour and hesitated to accept it. False modesty may be a doubtful virtue but over-confidence often leads to disgrace. At the same time I felt that Sir Shafaat Ahmad Khan and his colleagues were not likely to indulge in practical jokes at the expense of an unsuspecting fellow-worker, however humble and unworthy. They must have some reason—and good reason—for their choice. Then it dawned upon me that the eminent historians of Allahabad must have had in their view the great institution with which I have been closely associated for the last twenty years, and in honouring me they were paying their tribute to my *Alma Mater*. The University of Calcutta has done much to foster original investigations in Indian History and it was the first University in India to recognise the claims of Rajput History as a subject of special study. The Chair I have the honour to occupy bears the great name of Sir Asutosh, and it is in recognition of his services to the cause of historical learning in this country that I have been called upon to preside over the Early Medieval Section despite my patent

[1] Presidential Address, Early Medieval and Rajput History Section, Indian History Congress, Allahabad Session, 1938.

lack of worth. In this ancient land of piety and devotion the offerings made to the deity are always appropriated by the officiating priest, and I simply conformed to the traditional practice when, after long hesitation and searching of heart, I ultimately accepted the honour of which I am absolutely unworthy. My only excuse is that conceit had nothing to do with my decision.

The first problem that confronts a student of medieval Indian history is one of chronology. When did the Middle Ages begin in India? The European analogy is of little use to us, for the fall of Rome had no political or cultural repercussion in this country. The Roman empire conquered many lands beyond the confines of Europe, but India was not one of them. The Roman merchants visited these shores in quest of trade, and with the exchange of commercial articles they must have established a cultural contact to which the *Romaka Siddhānta* so eloquently testifies. But when the barbarian hordes from the more virile north burst upon the opulent empire of Rome, India pursued her political course unaffected and unsuspecting. The fifth century of the Christian era forms no dividing line in this country between two distinct ages. It is recognised that such a line of demarcation must be more or less arbitrary, but nonetheless it cannot be entirely without any justification. That is why we hesitate to agree with the late Dr. Vincent A. Smith when he says that the death of Harsha and the disruption of his empire marked the close of the ancient period and witnessed the dawn of the Middle Ages in India.

We do not know to what extent Harsha's fame is based on his own achievements. He was lucky in his friends. The Brahman Bāṇabhatta and the Chinese Yuan Chwang gave him a publicity which fell to the lot of few Indian princes in those days. But he was not the first empire-builder in India nor did his empire ever reach the dimension of the wide territories which owned the sway of the Maurya and the Gupta sovereigns. Probably his direct authority was limited to the modern United Provinces of Agra and Oudh and a slice of the Punjab to the west and a corner of Behar to the east. No ruling prince of the Deccan ever acknowledged his overlordship, and it is not unlikely that the mighty Chalukyas described him as '*Sakalottarāpatheswara*' (the sovereign of the entire Uttarāpatha) simply to exaggerate the power of a vanquished enemy and to emphasise the importance of their own victory. Even if we concede that Harsha enjoyed a predominant position among the contemporary kings of Northern India, we cannot afford to ignore the ephemeral character of his empire. It lacked that stability which sustained the Gupta empire for more than four generations, and it collapsed almost automatically with the passing away of its founder. The death of Harsha and the disruption of his empire did not upset the political balance in Northern India to such an extent as to inaugurate a new social order or to interrupt the normal course of cultural evolution on the old lines.

Nor can Harsha claim to be the last exponent of Hindu imperialism. Even if we leave the powerful dynasties of the south entirely out of account,

the Gurjara-Pratihara empire was certainly more stable and more extensive than that of the Thaneswar prince. Three emperors of this dynasty, Nagabhata, Bhoja and Mahendrapala, attained a pre-eminence which Harsha never reached; and although they ruled for nearly a century and half over an empire that stretched, roughly speaking, from the Sutlej to the Narbada and from the confines of Sind to the borders of the Pala kingdom of Bengal, their exploits remained unknown in the trans-Himalayan regions because no learned Chinese monk visited their realm. Empires rose and fell both before and after Harsha and ambitious rulers strove to leave their mark on the history of their country in all ages. Harsha's career was neither unique nor unusual in this respect and his reign can hardly be regarded as a political watershed. But Smith laid stress on one characteristic of the post-Harsha period which deserves careful scrutiny. It was then, he maintains, that " the hordes of foreign invaders were absorbed into the Hindu body politic and a new grouping of states was gradually evolved." He was evidently thinking of the new states that were founded on the ruins of the Roman empire in medieval Europe, but we must not forget that whenever a mighty empire falls to pieces the component provinces, consciously or unconsciously, try to set up a new political order in which their individual aims and ideals find more or less effective expression. That was exactly what happened when the Gupta empire fell before the repeated onslaughts of foreign invaders. But the assimilation of alien people in the body politic of India or the social scheme of the

Hindus was certainly not a novel thing. The Greeks, the Parthians, the Scythians and the Kushanas, peoples of diverse racial origin, representing varying stages of civilisation, had been absorbed in Hindu society long before Harsha appeared on the scene. Even the barbarian Huns were involved in this unceasing process of absorption and assimilation. The stone image of the divine boar at Eran bears as eloquent a testimony to the triumph of Hindu culture and catholicity as the Garuda pillar of Heliodorus. It was only when the Muslims came to India in the beginning of the 8th century that Hinduism failed for the first time to take the newcomers into its own fold, and here we can conveniently draw the line that separates the ancient from the medieval period.

The Arabs in their turn were followed by the Turks after a lapse of three centuries, but the Turkish invaders of India had already forsaken their ancestral faith and accepted the religion preached by the Prophet of Mecca. The ten centuries that intervened between the conquest of Sind and the battle of Plassey witnessed the origin, growth, development and decline of the Indo-Muslim culture. The Muslims failed to convert the major part of the Hindu population. The Hindus in their turn could not find any effective method of arriving at a reasonable compromise with the aggressive monotheism of the newcomers. But in course of time a synthesis of the two cultures took place that resulted in a distinct departure from, though not a cleavage with, the past. In the earlier part of this period the Rajput princes were engaged in a titanic conflict

with the Turkish invaders for political supremacy in Hindusthan. Later on, when they reluctantly owned defeat, we find the results of cultural contact in the religious doctrines of Chaitanya, Nanak, Ramananda, Kavir and Namdev; in the Indo-Saracenic Art and Architecture that flourished at Delhi, Agra, Sikri, Jaunpur, Gaur, Ahmadnagar, Bijapur and Golkonda; in the new literary movement that relegated Sanskrit to the background and discovered a new medium of expression in the hitherto neglected vernaculars; and in the new concept of state and the novel technique of statecraft.

Once the Muslim rulers succeeded in establishing their hegemony in Northern India, the seat of the paramount Power was established at Delhi, just as Pataliputra and Mahodaya had been associated with the sovereignty of Uttarāpatha in the preceding ages. But even the daring enterprise of the Turkish rulers could not unite the entire country under one administration for any length of time. For long the Narbada and the Vindhyas served as effective barriers to the south, and the conquest of the Deccan was invariably followed by the disruption of the empire. The Hindu opposition to the Muslim rule lay dormant for a while, but was never totally extinct. The Hindu Gakkars tried to exploit the weakness of the Muslim Central Government after Timur's invasion. Rana Sanga dreamt of a revived Hindu empire when Babur met Ibrahim Lodi at Panipat. The Rajputs, the Jats, the Bundelas challenged the might of Aurangzib in the heyday of Timurid supremacy and the Marathas under the inspiration of Shivaji became a military Power that

later threatened to subjugate the whole of India. It was at this crisis that the battle of Plassey gave the English a secure foothold in Bengal and a new era with distinctive features of its own was rung in and the old was rung out.

In the Middle Ages also empires rose and fell; small principalities were founded on their ruins, to be once more welded into a bigger entity as in the ancient days. The periods cannot be distinguished on the principle of political unity effected by ambitious conquerors or the disintegration of the state on account of provincial and racial differences. The growth of a new culture, the introduction of new elements in the body politic, the development of the vernacular literatures, a new synthesis of spiritual ideals certainly offer a surer line of demarcation.

It is not possible to discuss all the problems of medieval Indian history within the short compass of this Address. But I may be permitted to deal with one question that is not wholly of antiquarian interest to-day. The distribution of Muslim population in India demands some explanation. It is commonly believed that Islam followed the route of conquest and the subjugated people were forced to accept the faith of their rulers. The predominance of the Muslims in the Frontier Province and the Punjab lends some colour to this contention. But this theory cannot explain an overwhelming Muslim majority in Eastern Bengal. It is quite likely that the North-Western Frontier Province was peopled by Turkish folks during the Kushan days, and their easy conversion to Islam may be explained by racial affinity with the new conquerors; but the Muslims

of Eastern Bengal are certainly not racially akin to the Turks and the Afghans, and the conversion of the Hindus of that region must have been due to other reasons. Here the Muslim chronicles of the conquest of Sind throw some welcome light. According to the *Chāchnāma*, the Buddhists of Sind suffered all sorts of indignities and humiliations under their Brahman rulers, and when the Arabs invaded their country the Buddhists lent their whole-hearted support to them. Later on, when Dahir was slain and a Muslim Government was firmly established in his country, the Buddhists found to their dismay that, so far as their rights and privileges were concerned, the Arabs were prepared to restore *status quo ante bellum* and even under the new order the Hindus received a preferential treatment. The only way out of this difficulty was to accept Islam because the converts were entitled to all the privileges reserved for the ruling classes. So the Buddhists of Sind joined the Muslim fold in large numbers. It cannot be an accident that the Punjab, Kashmir, the district round Behar Sharif, North-East Bengal, where Muslims now predominate, were all strong Buddhist centres in the pre-Muslim days. It will not be fair to suggest that the Buddhists succumbed more easily to political temptations than the Hindus and the change of religion was due to the prospects of the improvement of their political status. It is noteworthy that the Buddhist Kings of Arakan used Mahomedan designations in addition to their own names and even issued medallions bearing the *Kalima*, the Mahomedan confession of faith, in Persian script. We may further note that the

present Mahomedan Sultans of the Federated Malay States are all descendants of the ancient Hindu ruling dynasties later converted to Buddhism. Their conversion to Islam was not effected by armed invasion. The Arabs visited their country as peaceful traders and the Malay kings accepted the new faith because it must have made a strong appeal to their emotion or reason. The masses must have emulated the example of their rulers and a Buddhist country has become in course of time almost entirely Muslim. This easy translation from Buddhism to Islam demands an explanation. On the eve of the Muslim conquest of India Buddhism had lost its original simplicity and had been overburdened with the complicated rites and rituals associated with the Mahayana cult. Why did these later Buddhists find it so easy to forsake their former faith and embrace Islam while their Hindu neighbours and countrymen remained more loyal to their ancestral belief?

The students of medieval history possess one marked advantage over the scholars interested in the preceding period. The Hindus had apparently little interest in historical literature, and Sanskrit chronicles and biographical works that have luckily survived to our times can be counted on our fingers. But the Muslim writers were not so indifferent to mundane matters and applied themselves diligently to historical investigations. In any case, contemporary chroniclers often strove to record the achievements of Muslim rulers and military leaders, and modern scholars found it comparatively easy to construct the framework of medieval Indian history.

Here I deem it necessary to sound a note of warning. There is a tendency in certain quarters to treat everything written in Persian as a primary source of history. Nothing can be more ridiculous. A Persian poem with a historical theme may reflect popular feelings of the time, but as historical material it cannot be classed higher than a Hindi or Marathi ballad. Similarly, no serious historian will attach the same value to a contemporary record and a later chronicle, simply because the latter may be written in Persian. Nor shall we be justified in accepting all the observations of a foreign traveller, European or Asiatic, without a critical examination of his sources of information. It is a pity that some of the most prominent writers of modern India fail to distinguish a chronicle from History and to evaluate properly and classify correctly the extant historical materials. It will be preposterous to place the correspondence of Aurangzib or Jai Singh in the same category with the chronicles of Bhimsen or Iradat Khan, simply because they belong to the same age and were written in the same language. To avoid confusion it should be frankly recognised that for the early Sultanate of Delhi we have no contemporary record,[1] and if we leave the numismatic and the scanty epigraphic materials out of account there remains hardly anything which can be termed as original sources.

The Persian chronicles suffer from another patent shortcoming. The chroniclers were mainly,

[1] The term "record" is used in its technical and not in its general sense.

if not solely, interested in the Court and the military aristocracy. Some of them deliberately sought the patronage of the ruling Sultan and the principal nobles. So far as they were concerned, the masses might have been altogether non-existent. The plodding peasants were probably taken for granted, but their sorrows and sufferings, their trials and tribulations, their pleasures and pastimes, their labours and recreations were considered too trivial to find any place in the chronicles specially compiled for the perusal of the great. The Muslim writers were seldom free from the religious bias that made them indifferent to the culture of the Hindus. The Hindu was a deluded misbeliever eternally doomed to perdition! It is only at rare intervals that an Alberuni turned his attention to the mathematical and metaphysical speculations of the Hindus or an Amir Khusru explored the treasures of Sanskrit literature. It is a pity that in spite of these defects the Persian chronicles still continue to influence the historical works on India. The two ponderous volumes that recently appeared with the impress of the Cambridge University Press amply prove that to many of our distinguished contemporaries medieval Indian history offers but a catalogue of bloody strifes and court intrigues. For them Chaitanya and Kavir had no message; Tulsidas and Muhammad Jaysi lived in vain so far as they were concerned; they ignore the lovely paintings of Mansur; the music of Tansen is wasted on them.

The historian should not be influenced by chauvinism, but he should not confuse a chronicle with History. He should not forget the teeming

millions toiling far from the metropolitan crowd. The self-effacing bard who catered for the poor and unconsciously created a new literature, the saintly teacher who preached the superiority of love and devotion, also demand his attention. He cannot afford to ignore the economic forces that go to the making of History. He must give a proper account of the religious, literary and artistic movements that gave his period its characteristic tone. He may complain that he cannot make bricks without straw and he is handicapped by the very defects from which the chronicles which form his principal sources suffer. But the historian, if he is true to his ideal, must draw upon fresh materials. Literature and archaeology may prove of immense value where the chronicles fail. We cannot take a narrow view of History and clip the wings of our Muse. We should not have recourse to unbridled imagination, but that is no reason why we should not set to make a scientific synthesis of every bit of information that literature, theology, philosophy and ancient monuments may yield.

The advent of Islam almost synchronised with the rise of the Rajput dynasties. The Rajputs were the Normans of India. Though they did not share the Norseman's seafaring tastes, the Rajputs were as daring, as chivalrous, as enterprising, as adventurous as those hardy warriors who carried their victorious arms from one end of Europe to another. For centuries the Rajput kings were the defenders of Hindu faith, the patrons of Hindu culture, the protagonists of Hindu traditions. They stood by the ancient Hindu ideals, and fearlessly defended

Hindusthan against repeated onslaughts of Islam. History has not so far taken an adequate notice of the part played by the Rajputs, but a warm admirer of theirs from the far-off West, Colonel Tod, paid eloquent tribute to their heroism: "What nation on earth would have maintained the semblance of civilization, the spirit or the customs of their forefathers, during so many centuries of overwhelming depression, but one of such singular character as the Rajput? . . . Rajasthan exhibits the sole example in the history of mankind, of a people withstanding every outrage barbarity can inflict or human nature sustain, and bent to the earth, yet rising buoyant from the pressure and making calamity a whetstone to courage." It is not for nothing that popular imagination still turns to Rajputana for patriotic inspiration. Smith was right when he said that "the centuries from the death of Harsha to the Muhammadan conquest of Hindusthan, extending in round numbers from the middle of the seventh to the close of the twelfth century, might be called with propriety the Rajput period."

It will however be wrong to suggest that when the Muslim conquest of Northern India was completed, the Rajputs, reconciled to their lot, beat their swords into ploughshares and permanently forsook their warlike habits in pursuit of the arts of peace. Can we ignore the part played by the petty Rajput chiefs of these provinces in the turbulent days of the so-called Syed kings? Even the Muslim historians could not ignore the exploits and achievements of the great Sanga. Were not the Rajputs

the virtual rulers of Malwa even when a Muslim prince reigned at Mandu? When the political genius of that great emperor, whom the devotion of his Hindu subjects loved to identify with the Ruler of the world, converted his inveterate foes into steadfast friends, the principal Rajput chiefs did indeed readjust their political outlook and whole-heartedly identified themselves with the Timurid empire. Soldiers and statesmen like Man Singh, Jaswant Singh, Mirza Raja Jai Singh, Ajit Singh and Abhai Singh fought for that empire in every part of India and sometimes their services were requisitioned in provinces outside the geographical bounds of this country. The proud rulers of Mewar, on the other hand, played a different role. Pratap Singh defied the might of Akbar, and his descendant Raj Singh unhesitatingly took the lead of a Rajput league organised to defend their ancient rights from the encroachments of Aurangzib. The Timurid empire is gone, the Maratha confederacy has vanished, but the Rajput states are still there. The Guhilot, the Rathor, the Kachchhapaghata chiefs still rule over their respective clans; and when the exigencies of another empire, to which they now owe their allegiance, demanded their services some years ago, they again donned their armours and drew their swords with their wonted zeal and accustomed ardour. During the palmy days of Rajput glory they produced mighty kings like Gurjara Bhoja, Chandella Dhanga, Kalachuri Karna, Paramara Bhoja, Solanki Jayasimha and Chauhan Prithviraj. In the day of their decline, when the Rajput rulers became mere vassals of the dominant Power, they

still maintained their military reputation untarnished, their chivalry and honour unsullied.

It is strange that the origin of the Rajputs should still remain a subject of controversy. The problem has been discussed threadbare from all points of view—legendary, historical, ethnological and sociological—but unanimity has not yet been reached. The story of "*Agni-Kula*" (fire origin) was apparently invented to camouflage some significant historical facts which some of the noble families of Rajasthan did not consider complimentary to their ancestors. Some of the Rajputs apparently had some racial affinity with the aborigines of the region; others might not have been totally unrelated to alien invaders. The name 'Rajput' is quite colourless. It includes numerous clans to whom it will be hazardous to attribute a common origin. Their only bond seems to have been a common ideal and a similar organisation. The erudition and industry of Prof. D. R. Bhandarkar have fairly established that the Guhilots at least were not directly descended from the Vedic Aryans. Aryan origin is also commonly denied to the Gurjaras. But the traditional view of purely Kshatriya origin does not suffer from lack of champions. In recent years the orthodox theory of indigenous origin has been very ably defended by Mahamahopadhyaya Gauri Shankar Hirachand Ojha and the late Rao Bahadur Chintaman Vinayak Vaidya. It is no disparagement of their scholarship or intellectual integrity if we say that so far they have not succeeded in carrying conviction to the opposite camp. The late Dr. Crooke probably stated the case fairly when he said, "Some of the

nobler Rajput septs are descended from Gurjaras or other foreigners, while others are closely connected with the indigenous races.'' Whatever their origin, the Rajputs identified themselves with the ancient ideas and military traditions of this land, and when they claimed kinship with ancient Solar or Lunar races, they simply asserted their legitimate right to the leadership of the Hindus which they had earned with their heart's blood.

Another interesting problem is the prevalence of Feudalism in medieval Rajputana. Tod was definitely of opinion that the Rajput states were feudal in character and the political organisation of the Rajputs was founded on feudal principles of service and protection. Crooke and Erskine, however, strongly controvert this assertion. They hold that the analogy between the tribal institutions of the Rajputs and the social organisation of medieval Europe is in the main superficial. '' It is of little use,'' argues Crooke, '' to compare two systems of which only the nucleus is common to both, and to place side by side institutions which present only a factitious similitude, because the social development of each has progressed on different lines.'' But we should not forget that Feudalism, after all, is a vague term indicating a certain form of political and social organisation in which land tenure plays a determining part. Maitland rightly observed that there was no *Feudal System,* there were many *feudal systems* in different parts of Europe. Feudal laws and feudal customs varied from country to country, from district to district. It is futile to seek in medieval Rajputana exactly those laws, customs and

practices with which the text-books on medieval European history have familiarised us. Tod says, "In remarking the curious coincidence between the habits, notions, and governments of Europe in the Middle Ages, and those of Rajasthan, it is not absolutely necessary we should conclude that one system was borrowed from the other; each may, in truth, be said to have the patriarchal form for its basis." European Feudalism may not have evolved from a patriarchal form of society, but in medieval Rajputana the clan system seems to lend some colour to Tod's view. In any case, Tod's elaborate comparison between Rajput customs and feudal institutions of Europe deserves further examination and scrutiny.

In Rajputana the clan dominated the state. In fact, originally the state belonged to the clan, the king being only a *primus inter pares*. Such a state of things could not but hamper the central authority and the Rajput king was as much handicapped by a conflict of prerogative and privileges as the Lodi Sultans of Delhi. Gradually, however, the king began to assert himself; and as he had to deal mainly with one ruling clan and not with several tribes, he ultimately succeeded in curbing the power of the feudal aristocracy. The transition from government by the elders to autocracy pure and simple must have been necessarily slow but the process is worth studying. It goes without saying that the example of the Timurid emperors must have supplied the necessary impetus to the subordinate rulers. As Prof. S. C. Dutt so aptly remarks, "The autocrat at the imperial capital supplied the

incentive to the prince to play the autocrat in his more limited sphere of action." While the whole world was moving, Rajputana could not stand still. The Rajputs also responded to outside influence of which the Timurid empire was the living embodiment.

The Rajputs were sturdy warriors but their military system has not yet been adequately analysed. They had their peculiar strategy and tactics. In a feudal force the cavalry naturally occupied the place of honour and the armoured knight with his broad sword and sharp lance led the charge. The infantry was not much thought of. With unparalleled obstinacy the Rajputs refused to learn new lessons and steadfastly clung to old and out-of-date methods. Probably the time-honoured rights and privileges of the clan stood in the way of military reform. We know as a matter of fact that in the 18th century many Maratha chiefs refused to have anything to do with trained infantry and Western methods of warfare. They were obliged to serve the state with a stipulated number of horsemen and they stood on their rights with a perverse tenacity which does little credit to their head. Such must have been the case in Rajputana also, for the Rajput cursed " those vile guns, which render of comparatively little value the lance of many a gallant soldier." It is difficult to say how far Vikramaditya of Mewar antagonised his nobles by his predilection for *paiks* or foot soldiers. It is a pity that the campaigns of the great Rajput warriors have not yet been studied with that scientific accuracy and industry which they deserve. The

prose chronicles of the Rajputs themselves and the Persian *tawarikhs* compiled by their Muslim adversaries, when carefully scrutinised, may prove a veritable mine of information.

As Dr. Tessitori observes, "The history of Medieval India has been so far compiled chiefly from the works of Muslim historians who represent the Rajput princes in a very unfavourable light, calling them infidel dogs, headstrong rebels, etc. Bearing such unfriendly feelings the Mahomedan historians never do full justice to the important role which Rajput princes played in imperial campaigns. The Rajasthani chronicles alone can redress the wrongs thus done to the Hindus in general by the Mahomedan historians. They draw before us a picture of Rajput life under the Emperors, and at the same time also of the imperial life as seen through Rajput spectacles." It is needless to say that the Persian chronicles cannot be and should not be ignored. But they should be supplemented and corrected in the light of the Rajput sources. For the earlier period Epigraphy is sure to prove of immense use, and great savants like Bühler, Kielhorn, Bhagwanlal Indraji and D. R. Bhandarkar have done important pioneer work in this direction. Sanskrit poetical works like *Prithvīrājavijaya* and *Hammīramadamardana* are avowedly historical works, and though poetical imageries and exaggerations may have encrusted the underlying facts, they certainly help us in getting a truer perspective.

For the later period we must turn to the Rajput bardic chronicles, and the prose works known as *Pidhiyās*, *Vātas* and *Khyātas*. The scientific study

of the bardic chronicles began and ended with Dr. Tessitori. It is a pity that the materials collected by this Italian scholar have not yet been properly used by Indian students. The bardic chronicles include short stray couplets, at first orally preserved and later reduced to writing, and commemorative songs. Sometimes the latter assumed gigantic proportions and attained immense popularity. Although the main object of such poetical works was the glorification of a particular hero and his *entourage*, the poet went out of his way to treat of the bygone ages. The most well-known work of this class is *Prithvīrāja Rāso* of Chand Bardai, which consists of many thousand verses and is by no means confined to contemporary events. But such ballads and poems must be treated with the utmost caution. The bards were avowed partisans and not impartial observers. They usually devoted their poetic skill to the glorification of their own patrons and the vilification of their rivals. Not infrequently they participated in court intrigues and their work was naturally vitiated by party bias and personal prejudice. Moreover, as professional poets they cared more for literary effect and less for truth and accuracy. As Dr. Tessitori observes, "In the magniloquent strains of a *cārana* everything takes a gigantic form, as if he was seeing the world with a magnifying glass; every skirmish becomes a Mahābhārata, every little hamlet a Lankā, every warrior a giant who with his arms upholds the sky. But, if one allows for these exaggerations and reduces things to their natural size, and at the same time denudes the facts of all fictions with which they are

coated, the kernel of truth can still be seen lurking inside." How apt these remarks would be in relation to the historical ballads of the Marathas who claim kinship with the Rajputs!

The Rajasthani historical prose works are more useful. The *Pidhiyās* furnish nothing but genealogical data and often consist of strings of names. From the sixteenth century biographical notes were added to these genealogies, compiled by stipendiary *bhāts* and Jain *jatis*. The *Vātas* consist of tales, romances, biographies and brief notices of important events. The *Khyātas* are genuine prose chronicles and the narrative was generally arranged in correct chronological order. So far as contemporary events or the recent past are concerned, the *Khyātas* are remarkably accurate. As Dr. Tessitori says, "They contained no legends, no lies, no quotation of bardic verses, no flatteries, but merely plain statements of facts teeming with names and dates, these facts contemporary and many of them witnessed by the writer." The *Khyātas* should be properly edited and published. It is a pity that the original text of the best of them, Nainsi's *Khyāta*, is not available in print. The time has come when every University student interested in the subject may legitimately claim a source book of Rajput history This need would have certainly been removed, had Sir Asutosh Mookerjee been spared for a few years more. Under his inspiring guidance the University of Calcutta made provision for the study of Sikh history, Maratha history and Rajput history. Not content with the mere recognition of Rajput history as a subject for examination and research,

he enlisted the services of a well-known Rajput scholar, Pandit Ram Karan—whose familiarity with the Rajput bardic literature and prose chronicles particularly qualified him for the task, with a view to the preparation of a reliable source book. Unfortunately the work was never accomplished, but let us hope that some other University financially better endowed than Calcutta will carry out Sir Asutosh's programme.

It is not possible nor is it necessary to attempt here a comprehensive survey of the work hitherto done with regard to medieval Indian history. It will be impertinent on my part to refer you to the pioneer work of such intellectual giants as Elphinstone, Erskine, Blochman, Beveridge, Thomas and Tod. But a brief reference to more recent investigations may not be absolutely out of place. Mahamahopadhyaya Gauri Shankar Hira Chand Ojha has earned the gratitude of all students of Indian history by his researches in Rajput history. Dewan Bahadur Harbilas Sarda's monographs in English are fairly well-known. Pandit Bisheshwar Nath Reu, Prof. Subimalchandra Dutt and Mr. Golapchandra Raychaudhuri have contributed several illuminating papers on various topics connected with the Rajputs. Of those scholars who relied mainly on Persian sources, the foremost place must be given to Henry Irvine and Sir Jadunath Sarkar. Irvine and Sarkar, between them, cover the entire period from the reign of Shah Jahan to the end of the eighteenth century. Medieval Numismatics has found able exponents in Mr. Nelson Wright whose recent publication is sure to replace the pioneer work

of Thomas, and Dr. N. K. Bhattasali whose work on the independent Sultans of Bengal is indispensable to all serious students. A brilliant school of History was founded here at Allahabad by Prof. Rushbrook Williams, which still flourishes under the able guidance of its present head. From the very beginning the Allahabad historians made medieval Indian history their own. The excellent text-books of Dr. Ishwari Prasad are used all over India. His researches on the Qaraunah Turks, Dr. Tripathi's monograph on administrative institutions of the Delhi Sultanate, Dr. Saksena's *History of Shah Jahan*, Dr. Beni Prasad's work on Jahangir and Prof. Rushbrook Williams's illuminating little volume on Babur have permanently established the reputation of Allahabad as a great centre of medieval studies. To Lucknow we are indebted for a monograph on Humayun, but for Humayun's rival Sher Shah we have to turn to Dacca. The biography of Sher Shah, however, is not the only work of Prof. Qanungo. His *History of the Jats*, though incomplete, is a work of great promise. It is quite in the fitness of things that the north-eastern frontier policy of the Mughals should engage the attention of a Dacca scholar : Dr. S. N. Bhattacharyya has given us an erudite treatise on that subject. It gives me great pride and pleasure to add that both Qanungo and Bhattacharyya are genuine products of the Calcutta University. Mr. Indubhushan Banerjee of Calcutta has recently brought out a volume on the *Evolution of the Khalsa*, which is sure to be counted among the most authoritative works on the subject. Dr. N. K. Sinha interests himself in a

subject which falls on the border line of modern and medieval periods. A series of brilliant papers has been published by Mr. Anilchandra Banerjee on the interesting subject of the evolution of the administrative system of the early Muslim kings of Delhi. At Madras the veteran Krishnaswami Aiyangar indefatigably works to extend the bounds of our knowledge. His efforts are being ably seconded by his successor, Prof. Nilkantha Shastri. The number of Maharastra scholars is too numerous to be mentioned here. A new History school is growing at Bombay under the inspiration of Father Heras who surveys all periods of Indian history with confidence and ability. The posthumous publication of Ibn Hasan proves what a promising scholar Indian history has lost in him.

Twenty-five years ago very few Indian scholars actively interested themselves in their country's past, but those who did were men of first-rate ability. To-day dozens of students are engaged in historical investigations at every University centre. We must seriously ask ourselves whether the gain in quantity has not been impaired by a corresponding loss in quality. It is impossible for outsiders to realise the waste in time, energy and money caused by dilettante work. We should also seriously enquire whether we are not encouraging research too early by intellectually immature students. These queries may be unpleasant, but professional teachers of History cannot conscientiously ignore them.

A crying need of the moment is some method of co-ordination, some effective means of preventing unnecessary reduplication. If Delhi is far off,

Lahore, Bombay and Madras are farther still. A co-ordinating agency is, therefore, urgently called for. We cannot permit unnecessary waste at this stage of our national development. Cannot we set up some board or committee whose business will be to keep note of and supply information about the research work in which the different Universities and private individuals are engaged? I have already referred to the excellent work done by Mr. Anilchandra Banerjee, but with the publication of Dr. Tripathi's volume on the identical subject Mr. Banerjee's papers became superfluous except for some minor points. Two years' hard work was thus wasted for lack of information and co-ordination. This Congress will render a valuable service to historical studies in India if it can set up an unofficial body to prevent such unnecessary reduplication. Probably the national committee affiliated to the International Congress of Historical Science will serve this purpose.

We must not forget that if much has been done, still more remains to be done. Those who care for an easy time, those who expect speedy results, those who hanker after spectacular effect, should go for some other sphere of activity. Historical investigation demands hard work and privation, indefatigable industry and self-effacement, intellectual integrity and devotion to truth.

THE MODERN AGE IN INDIA[1]

Let me thank you for the honour you have done me by asking me to preside over the Modern Indian History Section of the Indian History Congress. A younger man might have brought to your deliberations a clearer vision, a keener perception and a surer sense of realities; but our youthful colleagues are busy elsewhere making History and salvaging civilisation. Until better times bring them back to their old and accustomed spheres older men must not hesitate to step into the breach, hold the torch aloft and keep the sacred flame burning.

Before we proceed to examine any specific problem we have to answer three definite questions. Can we reasonably agree to a chronological division and regional segmentation of History? If so, what should be the determining factor in ascertaining the line of demarcation? To what extent can a particular region be isolated for the purposes of historical investigation? As Sir Charles Oman so pertinently observed, the professional historian is unable to answer many questions in the simple affirmative or negative. Our answer is bound to be qualified by many ' ifs ' and many ' buts.'

We believe in the unity of History; it is one of our cardinal creeds. History may not be coterminous with time but it embraces the whole range

[1] Presidential Address, Modern Indian History Section, Indian History Congress, Lahore Session, 1940.

of human experience, surveys the entire field of human activities and seeks to interpret and analyse the indefinite ideal which the mankind in general, urged by an irrepressible impulse, has been for thousands of centuries striving unceasingly to achieve. History flows like a river from the forgotten past to the unknown future. It cannot, therefore, be divided into chronological compartments. The present is rooted in the past, the future is only a projection of the present; as the past has left its indelible impress on the present, so the present is inevitably shaping the future. We are interested in the past because it helps us to understand the present and to forcast, however inadequately, the vital tendencies of the future. We have, therefore, to carry on our explorations backwards; but as we labour along the faint track the recent past recedes to the remote past, well authenticated facts are replaced by logical inferences, until at last all landmarks disappear and History loses itself in the intricate mazes of mythology. But within that limit there is hardly any break or discontinuity. A link may be missing here and there but there is no doubt about the chain itself. It is our business to reconstruct the past, to supply the missing links if possible, but it is not for us to break the chain into pieces or to ignore any of the existing links.

If the unity of History is admitted, how do we explain the popularity of chronological treatment? The answer is simple. The magnitude of the subject baffles our intellectual resources, and unable to grasp the whole we try to achieve the maximum results by devoting our limited time and intellect to

the most elaborate examination of a part. The scientific method of historiography, for which we are indebted to the great German savants of the nineteenth century, at once demands a more intensive and extensive examination of the original sources and necessarily restricts the period to be reviewed. Paradoxical though it may seem, there is no inconsistency between the accepted theory and the actual practice. A Botanist may devote his researches to the fossil plants or to the flora of a particular region or even to a particular order or genus of plants without any disloyalty to his science. A Zoologist, unable to traverse the entire animal kingdom, may quite reasonably restrict his survey to the Batrachians or to the minute polyps that build up the coral islands. That does not imply that he is oblivious of the existence of other forms of life. Similarly when a historian puts a chronological limit to the subject of his enquiry he does not deny, even by implications, the wider scope of his science; he simply confesses his own limitations. When we speak of 'modern,' 'medieval' or 'ancient' history we do not ignore the intimate interrelations of the different periods and the organic connection between the preceding and the succeeding ages. Convenience alone dictates a practice which conviction may find far from the ideal.

Regional segmentation of History also is not without serious difficulties. A Chemist may very well isolate an element in his laboratory and examine its properties. A Bacteriologist may culture a particular microbe and segregate it to study its life history. Can we in the same sense and to the same

extent isolate a particular geographical unit for historical investigations? Can we, to be more concrete, isolate India for such a purpose? Was India at any time in her chequered past so cut off from the rest of the world as to pursue her course independent of her environments? Known facts hardly support such a hypothesis. We have not yet been able to read the script once in vogue at Mohenjo Daro and Harappa. We do not know what language those ancient people spoke but we know that there was a great affinity between the civilisation that flourished in the lost cities of Sind and the Punjab millenniums before the birth of Christ and that of ancient Mesopotamia. Is it an accident that clay seals with animal figures and pictographs similar to those of Mohenjo Daro have been discovered in ancient Mesopotamian sites? Are we sure that the Dravidians had nothing to do with the people of Sumer and Akkad? Did the Aryans evolve their civilisation entirely in the congenial soil of the land of the five rivers or did they bring the rudiments of their culture from their original home now no longer remembered? Coming to historical times we find that the first important facts of which we are aware relate to other people and other lands. If the details of the Persian invasion have been lost, the Macedonian expedition forms the first landmark in ancient Indian history. Can we ignore the importance of the Hellenic sources, the Ceylonese sources, the Chinese and the Tibetan sources in reconstructing India's past? India's relations with the world outside grow wider and more intimate as we approach our own times.

Civilisations and cultures have a tendency to migrate from land to land irrespective of racial movements. I need not apologise for repeating these truisms, for in recent times there has been such a craze for over-specialisation at an immature stage that a thorough revision of our syllabus and a complete reorientation of our studies are definitely called for.

Regional segmentation of History is based to a certain extent on logical and psychological grounds. Though we recognise the unity of History we cannot deny the diversity of human impulses. Human mind reacts differently under different stimulii and responds differently to different environments. Geography, as is commonly acknowledged, shapes History but geographical influences may be modified or accentuated by human action as happened to the Mediterranean region and England respectively after the discovery of the new world. Though human civilisation is one in its essentials, it has many phases and diverse aspects. Every man moreover feels a greater interest in his immediate neighbourhood. That is why we start with that branch of History which deals with our own country, our own people and our own times. That is the justification of the Indian History Congress and the Modern Indian History Section. That is why so many parallel and perpendicular lines have been drawn across the wide domain of History. That is why we are not content with political history alone but we feel the need of cultural and institutional history as well. After all, ideas are more important than deeds; for deeds are at best the outward reflection of the ideas which supply the motive force in

all human affairs. Ideas transcend time and space but the same ideas may not gain currency in all parts of the world, the same principle may not dominate human action in all countries during the same chronological period. Therefore the same chronological division does not hold good for all regions.

To return from the abstract to the concrete, when did the Modern Age begin in this country? 'Modern,' 'medieval' and 'ancient' are relative terms and we cannot draw a line of demarcation which will held good for all time. Chronological boundaries are liable to change like the shifting course of a river, but unlike geographical limits historical terminii are never clear cut or distinct. We cannot say, without being charged with undue dogmatism, that a certain epoch came to an abrupt end on a particular day in a particular year when the succeeding age immediately came into being. We cannot ring out the obsolete period and ring in the new. They merge into one another and for a considerable time the line of demarcation is blurred and indistinct. Provision should, therefore, be made for an interregnum between two distinct historical periods and for periodical revision of their limits.

The duration of a historical period is determined by the efficiency of its dominant principles. A negative influence indicates decadence and intellectual anarchy usually marks the dissolution of the old order but does not denote the inauguration of the new. The period of decadence forms the interregnum. A new age is associated with harmony

and order. When forms are devoid of reality, when theories cease to be based on facts, we find the surest evidence of approaching revolution which is to evolve order out of chaos. But the process is likely to cover many decades. It is easy to say when the decline of the Mughal empire began but is it possible to assign a precise date to its fall? The premonitions of the impending disaster were probably perceived as early as the first decade of the 18th century, but will it not be rash to assert that the Mughal empire ceased to exist with the passing away of the great Alamgir? When did the end come? With the invasion of Nadir Shah? With the murder of Alamgir II? With the British occupation of Delhi? The empire as a political entity ceased to function long before Nadir Shah exposed its hollowness to a horrified India, but the form survived the reality and a Padshah continued to reside in the red fort of Shah Jahan till the anachronism was removed in the middle of the last century.

Does the passing away of the empire synchronise with the advent of the Modern Age in India? Was the so-called Mughal period essentially medieval in its political institutions, intellectual outlook and economic organisation?

In Europe the seventeenth century witnessed that intellectual revolution and religious upheaval which marked the end of medieval faith and established the modern supremacy of reason. Blind faith gradually yielded place to reasoned conviction. In the next century religion gradually ceased to enjoy any political importance as the Church had been

subordinated to the State. Science occupied the predominant place that formerly belonged to Theology. By this test modern Indian history does not begin before the middle of the nineteenth century. The new ideas had indeed been long in the air, the spirit of rebellion was already at work, but as a single swallow does not make the spring so the bold pioneers do not make the new age, though they are certainly the harbingers of the future order. The Revolutionary period in Europe did not begin with Voltaire and Rousseau; it commenced when their teachings lost their novelty and their theories became the accepted political creed of the common people. Not until the new ideas become commonplace can the new age be said to have fairly commenced. The royal astronomer of Jaipur was in close intellectual contact with his fellow scientists in the West. Jai Singh took every care to have the standard Western works on Astronomy translated into Persian but he was far in advance of his times. He was not a typical representative of his age. Another pioneer was Ram Mohan of Bengal, but an age is to be judged not by its geniuses but by the common man. The common man in Ram Mohan's days still confused faith with reason. The Age of Reason in India, the Modern Age, the scientific age, is hardly a century old and for aught we know it is probably quickly nearing its close. The world war may usher new ideas and novel conceptions in the light of which the present state of things may appear obsolete and out of date and the future historian may have once again to revise his chronology and rearrange his charts.

What will be the central theme of modern Indian history? Many headings may be, and have been suggested: Pax Brittanica, Evolution of Democratic Institutions, Growth of Capitalism, Decay of Rural India, Rise of Militant Nationalism, Passing of the Old Order, Diffusion of Western Learning, Growth of Vernacular Literature, will each make a catching title. As manifestations of the modern mind in India they deserve a careful examination and analysis and some excellent monographs have already been written. Interesting as these movements are, they form nothing but a clue to the dominant force that gave our times their characteristic features. The central theme round which they will fit in a harmonious and consistent pattern is however different; it is the Fusion of Cultures. Fusion of Cultures is not a new thing in India and the ancient Hindu colonies in the Far East. India has been from time immemorial the meeting place of many races; in this magic cauldron have been thrown diverse languages, cults and civilisations, to be brewed into a wonderful potion that still brings solace and peace to millions of human beings. But how the synthesis was effected, what proportion of alien elements was eliminated, how much of foreign civilisation was absorbed, we do not exactly know. What was the contribution of Mohenjo Daro and Harappa to the Vedic culture and Indo-Aryan civilisation? How many members of the Dravidian pantheon were transformed into Hindu deities and transported to the Hindu paradise? Did the noseless *Dasyu* absolutely fail to influence the culture of the fair conquerors? What

is India's indebtedness to China and Tibet, to Greece and Rome, to the old civilisations of Babylon and Assyria? Our available data are so meagre that we must remain content with conjectures and surmises. We are on firmer grounds when we come to the Muslim period but here also our sources are not as wide and voluminous as we might wish. The intensity of our researches must depend on the extent of our sources and when we come to modern times our sources grow in variety as well as in volume. India is no longer the fabulous land of the pagoda tree; it is an integral part of the busy world within easy reach of every civilised country. If the balance of trade is slightly upset in any corner of the world, the reaction is at once felt in India. If a literary genius makes his debut in an obscure town of Latin America, his works find admiring readers in this country. If a momentous scientific discovery is made in Europe, it is immediately exploited here either for industrial purposes or for intellectual edification. Never before had the fusion of two cultures been more complete, the synthesis of two civilisations more harmonious, the intercourse between different races more fruitful. This fusion of cultures, this synthesis of civilisations, this union of peoples might form a fitting subject for the pen of a Mommsen, might inspire the imagination of a Gibbon and enlist the industry of a Ranke. But Mommsens, Gibbons and Rankes are not born every day. The task of a genius must, therefore, be undertaken by a corporation of scholars. There is ample scope of co-operation in the service of our Muse. Ours is an industry where competition does

not necessarily contribute to efficiency. Ours is a journey which must be shared by all without the least intention of stealing a march over a fellow wayfarer.

Before concluding I feel tempted to make one enquiry which I hope will not be deemed impertinent. The modern West has relegated religion to the background. What is the position of religion in modern India? Has spiritualism completely yielded place to materialism under the impact of the West? The State in India does not derive its sanction from Theology to-day. But are the current political creeds totally unaffected by the teachings of the old scriptures? That they are free from priestly influences is apparent. Mr. Gandhi is not a Brahman, Mr. Jinnah is not a *Mullah*. But we are too near the events to have a correct perspective. The ' unchanging ' East is having a mad orgy of changes but it is too early to assert that she has cast her mysticism aside. Science has worked wonders in every sphere of life but spiritualism may at the last resort seek refuge in the very science that shook its foundation so badly. Some day probably an Indian Tawney or an Indian Weber will take up this fascinating subject but neither the proper man nor the appropriate moment has arrived as yet.

I am not inclined to blame my countrymen because more work on modern Indian history has been done in the British Isles than in India. Our British friends had an early start. They had ready access to the contemporary official records, private correspondence of prominent personages and family papers preserved in the public and private archives

of England, while access to archives in India was strictly limited. Only the fortunate few who could cross the sea and go to London and Paris in search of their sources could employ their time and industry to some useful purpose. Others had necessarily to confine their investigations to more convenient subjects for which ample materials were available in India. But things of late have luckily changed for the better. The Government of India have recently thrown the portals of their record rooms wide open to all seekers of knowledge. The Provincial Governments are sure to follow the example of the Centre sooner or later. Our scholars must now exploit this unique opportunity to the best of their abilities. Let them come to this vast storehouse of knowledge with a co-ordinated scheme so that a minute of their time, an ounce of their energy, a pie of their money may not be wasted through unnecessary reduplication of labour. Let me assure you that there is ample work for each and every one of us in these unexplored mines.

If our study is to be exhaustive and thorough, it will not do to confine our attention to the state archives alone. Equally voluminous records may be awaiting the scholar's scrutiny in private custody all over the country. The old records lying uncared for in the Zemindar's *Kachhari*, in the ancient temples and monasteries, in the family mansions of the rich, the grocer's ledgers, the banker's accounts, the *Dhobi's* bill, the farmer's wages roll, the housewife's bazar chits must all be laid under contribution and every place from the prince's palace to the peasant's hut must be scoured for them. A con-

certed survey must be organised in every province, in every district to bring these valuable private records to light. We can do nothing better than to emulate the example of a noble son of the Punjab. Born in the land of the five rivers Dr. Balakrishna transferred his sphere of activities to far off Maharashtra. He started his work in the British archives but later turned his attention to the indigenous records in private custody. His was not a solitary quest, for in Maharashtra many sincere scholars have devoted their lives to this noble work. Our Muse is an exacting mistress; she demands undivided devotion and the frail physique of Dr. Balakrishna could not bear the strain. He died in harness. Two years back he presided over this section at Allahabad and his voice must be still ringing in your ears. Last year he sent a resolution to the Indian Historical Records Commission calling upon the Government of India to secure transcripts of all contemporary records relating to this country now preserved in lands beyond the seas. He passed away before his mission was fulfilled. It is for us who survive to take up his unfinished work. May his tired soul find peace and consolation in the assurance that his colleagues will do what he left undone, his friends will complete what he left unfinished and his countrymen will achieve his cherished hopes and devout desires.

The history of modern India has yet to be written. To outsiders India is a land of complexities and contradictions. Her culture has never been exclusive, her civilisation has never been aggressive, her conservatism has always been tempered with a

toleration all her own. Reverence for the old has never degenerated here to aversion of the new. Assimilation and not annihilation has been her racial policy. It is for the future historian to say whether India has been true to herself in the commercial clashes and racial conflicts of the last two centuries. It will be our task to bring together and preserve for the future generations their rightful heritage, the raw materials of modern Indian history. It will be our duty to rescue from decay and dissolution those indigenous records on which modern Indian history must be based. It will be our care to rouse the public conscience and to persuade the custodians of the public purse to do their duty by the archives in India, public and private.

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